Periodization, translation, prescription and the emergence of Classical French[1]

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Abstract

In this article we demonstrate how fine-grained analysis of salient features of linguistic change over a relatively short, but significant period can help refine our notions of periodization. As our case study, we consider whether it is appropriate to distinguish a period called *français préclassique* ('Pre-Classical French'), and if so, what its temporal limits are. As our contemporary informants we take, on the one hand, the comments of writers of remarks on the French language, who were highly conscious of language change, and on the other, usage in successive French translations of the same Latin source text which can be exploited to track and date the adoption of 'modern' linguistic variants. We find atypical patterns of change – and notably changes which move rapidly through Labov's different stages – that contribute to the sense of discontinuity or periodization. However, this sense of 'rupture' does not coincide with the chronological boundaries hitherto suggested for *français préclassique*, thus throwing the validity of this period into question.

1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper we wish to demonstrate how fine-grained analysis of key features of linguistic change over a relatively short, but significant period of change can help us refine our notions of periodization. As our case study, we will consider whether it is appropriate to distinguish a period called *français préclassique* ('pre-classical French'), and if so, what its temporal limits are. The identification of periods implies, on the one hand, that there are stretches of time in history which share relatively stable characteristics and, on the other, that there are breaks, or at least moments when a number of changes cluster together or change accelerates, transforming minor variants into the dominant usage. We are conscious that periodization is a highly contentious notion. Scepticism towards the possibility of periodization is clearly articulated, for instance, by Roger Wright (2013: 107-108) in his chapter on periodization in the *Cambridge History of the Romance Languages*. Wright expresses surprise that the term is absent from Trask's *Dictionary of Historical and Comparative Linguistics* (2000), but nevertheless cites with approval Ralph Penny's view (2000:5) that "all notions of periodization are misplaced in language history […]; linguistic development is as seamless as all other cases of linguistic variation".

Discussions of periodization – whether of historical events, literary history, or any other form of cultural history – indeed constantly note the artificiality of cutting up the past which is a continuum, but the benefits it nevertheless brings as an organising principle for scholarship.[2] As Wilhelm Nicolaisen (1997: 165) observes, language historians have constantly bemoaned the arbitrary nature of the dates suggested for linguistic periods:

> but after having done so, almost immediately and without proper methodological justification treat[s] the segments of time so arbitrarily defined as genuine unified and homogeneous periods, frequently on non-linguistic grounds because of such monumental historical events as the arrival of Germanic settlers in Britain or the Norman invasion, or linked to the claim that "there have been … certain times, at which linguistic changes took place more rapidly than others, owing to special attendant circumstances" (Krapp 48[3]). Whatever that may mean.

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[1] We are grateful to Terttu Nevalainen, Shana Poplack, and Peter Trudgill for reading and commenting on an earlier version of this paper. All opinions and errors remain our own.

[2] For discussion of periodization across a range of fields see, for instance, Besserman (1996), Brown (2001), and Blackbourn (2012).

[3] The reference is to George Philip Krapps's history of English, *Modern English: Its Growth and Present Use* (1909, revised 1969).

Fisiak (1994: 47) similarly remarks that periodization is often justified by such vague notions as 'convenience', 'clarity of presentation', 'pedagogical' or other specified advantages, but concludes (1994: 58-59) that it can be a useful idealization, and that idealizations are common in other areas of linguistic analysis. Lass (2000: 19), however goes further. He notes that whilst Fisiak rightly asserts that Middle English is a convenient term rather than a linguistic reality, Fisiak himself has nevertheless written an excellent grammar of this non-existent entity, which is coherent enough to suggest that in some sense it must be something. Lass concludes (2000: 35) by asserting that the notion 'Middle' (as in 'Middle English') is partly a conventionalist move, but also reflects a kind of 'reality', and that "there are apparently suites of characters that serve to define it, at least loosely". Our aim is then to explore through our French case study whether periodization is a notion which must be rejected on theoretical grounds and which at best can only be salvaged for practical descriptive convenience, or whether, as Lass (1997: 304) has claimed, '[t]he picture of language history may well be one not of continuous change (even if variation is continuous), but of long periods of (underlyingly polymorphous) stasis punctuated by short bursts of innovative activity'. This latter view would seem to justify retaining some notion of periodization.

The quotation cited above points to one of the key issues that has troubled historical linguists: what should the balance be between internal linguistic data and external historical evidence? Perhaps unsurprisingly, we will argue that priority must be given to the linguistic data, and only once this has identified, if possible, what Herbert Penzl (1994: 261) calls "natural" stages within the documentable history of a language, should linguists look to see whether there are any features of the political, social or cultural context which help explain why there might have been a 'rupture'.[4]

A second question concerns whether periodization should more appropriately focus on the long or the short term. David Blackbourn (2012) has noted the general tendency towards a proliferation of historical periods, with a renewed emphasis on contingency and the short term. The history of French, in common with many language histories, was for a long time typically divided into three broad periods – Old French, Middle French and Modern French. A two-fold subdivision of each of these periods has also been proposed, giving Early Old French and the 'heyday' of Old French; Middle and Renaissance French; Classical (and Neo-Classical) and Modern French.[5] A more recent innovation is *français préclassique*[6], which has been the subject of much debate (see section 2 below). Whilst some scholars have argued for the unity of this period, running from c.1550-c.1650, Philippe Caron (2002), for instance, has maintained that there is a break c.1620 since there is a significant bundling of linguistic changes around this period.[7] In this paper he introduces the notion of *chronolect*, and, on the analogy of dialectology, argues that, just as dialectologists seek bundling of isoglosses, so historical linguists should seek clusters of changes. Another relevant concept is the notion of a generation. As early as 1973, Georges Matoré, in a study of lexical semantics, favoured the idea of 'generations' for measuring the chronology of change; he suggested that the history of French can be divided into tranches of 30-36 years, "moyenne de la vie sociale utile" ('the average useful social life'). Matoré therefore proposed the following pivotal dates for the period which concerns us: 1550, 1585, 1620, 1656 and 1688. As we shall see (section 3.1), the notion of generation is also implicit in the comments found in metalinguistic texts of the period.

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[4] To be clear, we are not of course claiming that language changes in isolation from society or its speakers, quite the contrary (see section 7 below). Rather we are simply arguing that we should use internal linguistic data as the basis for dating periods, and then examine how far these dates correlate with important external events. All too often periodization has started from historical facts, such as the French Revolution, rather than from linguistic evidence, and it is against this approach that we are arguing.

[5] There is variation in the naming of these periods as well as concerning their temporal limits. Other studies have relied rather on century divisions; see for example Marchello-Nizia (1992) or Seguin (1972).

[6] Note the use of the relational label '*pre*-classical French'.

[7] In fact, in 2002 Philippe Caron favoured identifying a break c. 1610-1620, somewhat earlier than we would now suggest.

A third question which we will address is the number and type of features which it is appropriate to analyse in determining linguistic periods. Henry Sweet famously relied on only one feature in his analysis of the history of English, whereas Roger Lass (2000) argues convincingly for a larger set of diagnostics. In the same way that Hock and Joseph (1996: 361) enquired whether "some isoglosses [are] more salient, or more equal, than the others", we might ask question whether there are certain isochrons which are particularly salient for the history of a language. We will argue (section 4) that one way of addressing this question is to consider which features contemporary metalinguistic texts were highlighting as the most salient features of linguistic change[8]. In so doing, we will consider both what is coming to be considered archaic or being lost and what are identified as the new or progressive variants.[9]

Finally, we hope to contribute something to the discussion of appropriate sources. Recent work, notably on the history of English, has tended to privilege either personal correspondence, considered by some (e.g. Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg 2012: 32) as the "next best thing" to authentic spoken language, or the analysis of multi-genre corpora with a view to tracking change as it spreads across different text types (e.g. Tristram & Ayres-Bennett 2012). In the present study our analysis is limited to the standard written language, since, as Blake editor of the second volume of the *Cambridge History of the English Language* observes (1994: 42), the standard traditionally forms the premise on which the language has been divided into diachronic periods. We make no claim for the more general representativity of this for contemporary usage, but hope that our conclusions may provide a reference for subsequent studies in their interpretation of non-standard usages and in dating changes in other genres and text types.[10]We demonstrate how different translations of the same source text provide a rich testing ground for our analysis and how they can be exploited to track and date the adoption of 'modern' linguistic variants. Detailed comparison of this usage with the pronouncements made in apparently prescriptive metalinguistic texts in turn offers us insights into the value of these texts as sources of information about linguistic change and its chronology. In short, the contribution of what have often been dismissed as prescriptive works has often been underestimated.

2. PERIODIZATION: A CRITICAL OVERVIEW

The history of French – like many other languages – was originally divided into three broad periods – Old French, Middle French and Modern French – and this periodization is still frequently employed in manuals and textbooks today. Old French is typically said to start from the appearance of the earliest extant French text, the *Strasbourg Oaths* (842 AD), and to finish around the end of

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[8] To cite Hickey (2012: 391): "Salient features are those that speakers recognize as typical of a variety or language and to which they may react positively or negatively. […] Negative and positive salience are frequently associated with stigma and prestige respectively". Trudgill (1986: 11) notes that salience attaches to markers and indeed turns variables into markers in the first place. Language change and stigmatization are among the factors listed which carry sufficient salience for becoming a target for accommodation. We have deliberately chosen to consider variables which contemporary observers noted as those most affected by change, since this seemed one way of avoiding an arbitrary selection of linguistic features.

[9] Nicolaisen (1997: 166) argues that it is important to consider the continuities as well as the discontinuities when identifying periods, but the focus here is on linguistic change.

[10] There is a relative paucity of documentation for non-literary usage for this period, and of the type of ego-documents used particularly for the history of Germanic languages. Currently available for metropolitan French are the journal of Jean Héroard (Ernst 1985) and the *Textes français privés des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Ernst & Wolf 2005), all of which have associated problems (see Ayres-Bennett 2014). In response to this issue, the *Réseau Corpus Français Préclassique et Classique* (Antonella Amatuzzi, Wendy Ayres-Bennett, Annette Gerstenberg, Lene Schøsler, Carine Skupien-Dekens) was created in 2014, and a number of genre-specific corpora are currently being created, including journalism (Mairi McLaughlin), sermons (Carine Skupien Dekens), and diplomatic correspondence (Annette Gerstenberg, Antonella Amatuzzi). Work on Canadian French is more advanced through the efforts of France Martineau and others. The interpretation of apparently non-standard usages is often challenging because of uncertainty as to how to interpret the variation. For instance, when we are faced with the usage of the young Dauphin, the future Louis XIII, in Héroard's journal should we ascribe non-standard variants to his social status, his age, the spoken nature of the data, etc. (see Ayres-Bennett 2014).

the 13th century. There is general consensus in the literature on the history of French about this broad period, although, as is the case with the other periods, it is sometimes subdivided into two shorter periods. Thus in his monumental *Grammaire nouvelle de l'ancien français* (2000), Claude Buridant differentiates the language of the earliest texts (c. 842-1130 AD) from classical Old French (c. mid-12th c. until the beginning of the 14th c.).

There is considerably more debate about the chronological limits of Middle French, notably whether it covers just the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries or also includes the sixteenth century.[11] In her authoritative *Histoire de la langue française aux XIVe et XVe siècles*, Christiane Marchello-Nizia (1979: 3-5) lists a wide range of linguistic and external arguments to justify the 1300s as the beginning of her period, but simply mentions the publication of the first grammars of the vernacular published in France as the decisive factor for excluding the sixteenth century from her study.[12] More recently, the authors of the on-line *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français* ('Dictionary of Middle French') have settled their *terminus a quo* "around 1330", but the justifications offered for this date are mostly historical[13]: a new Valois dynasty, the beginning of the Hundred Years War, plagues, rebellions, poverty, etc. The dating offered based on linguistic criteria, "the beginning of the 14th century", is less precise; these include the loss of the two-case system and major changes in French word order. The choice of the *terminus ad quem* is more problematic: it is justified mainly by the desire to avoid overlapping with Edmond Huguet's Dictionary of Sixteenth-Century French (Huguet 1925-1967), but this practical reason is "reinforced", the authors add, by the fact that "the end of the 15th century is undoubtedly a milestone: direct contact is established with ancient Greek, Hellenisms spread, Italian and, to a lesser extent, Spanish exert a growing influence, a new grammatical conscience appears through the grammars of Meigret, Palsgrave, Peletier du Mans or Henri Estienne".[14] Indeed, it seems that whenever the sixteenth century is viewed as a discrete period, the criteria used, whether explicitly or not, are largely historical. According to Pierre Guiraud (1963: 6), "Many authors distinguish a period of Middle French comprising the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries from a sixteenth-century Middle French. This division […] is justified on historical grounds and the links between language and society and ideas, and in particular with the rebirth of humanism".[15] In our opinion, where such external factors are used to support periodization based on internal features they are of undoubted interest, but they should never replace or take priority over these.

We find the same dearth of linguistic arguments to support the dating of Modern French. Nathalie Fournier's *Grammaire du français classique* cites examples, she says, "covering the whole [*sc.* 17th] century, whilst being centred on the period 1660-1690 which is the period in which what one might term the classical synchrony flourishes" (1998: 8).[16] Frequently for the modern period, works are devoted to a particular century, such as Jean-Pierre Seguin's *Histoire de la langue française au XVIIIe siècle* (1972), or volume 6 of Ferdinand Brunot's monumental *Histoire de la*

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[11] Here, of course, we are also dealing with another common model for periodization, by century. See also Gougenheim (1974) and the discussion of modern French below.

[12] The earliest French grammars are those by Palsgrave (1530), a grammar intended for the English, Dubois (1531), a grammar written in Latin and heavily influenced by Latin grammatical models, and Meigret (1550), the first grammar written in French and published in France.

[13] See Robert Martin's presentation of the 2012 on-line version of the *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français* at http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/PresentationDMF2012.pdf p. 7.

[14] "L'argument pratique emporte d'autant plus la conviction que la fin du XVe siècle marque un incontestable clivage. Ce n'est qu'au XVIe siècle que, par le contact direct avec le grec ancien, les hellénismes vont se répandre ; que l'italien, et, dans une moindre mesure, l'espagnol vont exercer leur influence; que s'instaure une véritable réflexion grammaticale sur la langue vulgaire (avec des grammairiens comme Meigret, Palsgrave, Peletier du Mans ou encore Henri Estienne". Throughout the English translations are by WA-B.

[15] "Beaucoup d'auteurs distinguent un moyen français du XIVe et XVe siècle et un moyen français du XVIe siècle. Cette division […] est justifiée du point de vue de l'histoire et des rapports de la langue avec la société et les idées – en particulier avec l'humanisme renaissant."

[16] "Les exemples […] couvrent tout le siècle, tout en étant surtout centrés sur la période 1660-1690, qui est la période d'épanouissement de ce qu'on peut appeler la synchronie classique."

langue française, which likewise deals with the eighteenth century.[17] The authoritative *Trésor de la langue française* (*TLF*), the largest corpus-based dictionary of contemporary French launched in the 1960s under the auspices of the French CNRS (National Centre for Scientific Research), perpetuates the same periodization, considering the 19th and 20th centuries as the limits of contemporary French.[18] Likewise, the authors of the *Nouvelle Histoire de la langue française* edited by Jacques Chaurand (1999) has chapters on the sixteenth century (Geneviève Clérico), the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Jean-Pierre Seguin), and the (long) nineteenth century (1790-1902, Jacques-Philippe Saint-Gérand).

In recent times, this traditional classification has been challenged with the introduction of a new period, pre-classical French; once again there is a lack of consensus about its precise chronological limits. A periodical entitled *Le Français pré-classique* was launched in 1990: on the front cover of each issue the dates proposed are 1500-1650, whilst on the journal's website alternative dates are suggested – 1489-1640 – without any explanation for the inconsistency.[19] The third volume of Brunot's *Histoire de la langue française,* entitled 'La Formation de la langue classique' perhaps already foreshadowed the notion of pre-classical French, although it covers the briefer period of 1600-1660.[20] In a volume edited by Bernard Combettes (2003) the corpus of travel narratives used to illustrate pre-classical French usage dates from 1558-1636; the terminus *ad quem* is again associated with the judgements of grammarians.[21] We may note that in their section on the lexis, Picoche and Marchello-Nizia ([3]1994) consider that classical French starts as early as 1605.

In an important article published in 2010, Bernard Combettes and Christiane Marchello-Nizia review the reasons for identifying a discrete period of *français préclassique.*[22] Having argued convincingly against the traditional periodization by century, as favoured by Georges Gougenheim (1974) for the sixteenth century, they propose two types of period, periods of stability and periods of change, citing Classical French as an example of the former and Middle French and Pre-Classical French as cases of the latter. This distinction is somewhat at odds with our definition of a period, which implies relative stability.[23] Combettes and Marchello-Nizia (2010) identify a range of morphosyntactic features which point to 1550 as the terminus *a quo,* including the regularisation of verbal paradigms, the order of clitic pronouns, changes in the system of relative pronouns, etc., but they provide much less detail about the terminus *ad quem,* which they identify as 1650 or 1660[24], citing as possible diagnostic features the position of clitic pronouns with modal verbs, the generalisation of pronoun subjects, and the fixing of the object next to the verb on which it depends. They point to other features which changed during the period, such as the distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs. They conclude by questioning how to reconcile the notion of 'frontier' with that of cycles of changes, and by wondering whether the whole notion of periodization should not, at least temporarily, be abandoned in favour of as rich and fine analysis as possible of individual phenomena.

Perhaps surprisingly, Combettes and Marchello-Nizia make no mention of Caron's (2002) article which proposes rather a break – or what he terms a 'chronolectal frontier' – around 1620.

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[17] See, however, our discussion of volume 3, 'La Formation de la langue classique (1600-1660)', below.

[18] The on-line version can be consulted at http://atilf.atilf.fr/.

[19] See http://pensee-classique.ens-lyon.fr/spip.php?article728

[20] Tritter (1999) is a good example of the hesitation over the appropriate periodization for this period, even within the scope of a single volume. At the beginning of his chapter on the sixteenth century (1999: 52), the author asks why he is devoting a separate chapter to this century, yet on the same page he seems to suggest that the rapid period of change he associates with the period ends in the 1630s.

[21] Cf. Wright (2013: 122) who notes that Romanists sometimes see periods as being introduced by attempts at standardization; in Italy this would mean identifying the thirteenth, sixteenth and nineteenth centuries as turning points, for France the seventeenth-century with the establishment of the *Académie française.*

[22] See also the debate between Combettes and Badiou-Monferran in the first issue of *Diachronique* (April 2011) which is devoted to the question of periodization.

[23] More interestingly, they note the different rhythms of change, giving the example of the replacement of the intensifier *moult* ('much') by *très* ('very') which happens slowly and progressively between the 13th and the 16th centuries, whereas that of *moult* by *beaucoup* ('much') is much quicker (1450-1550).

[24] Combettes (2003) favours 1660.

Caron draws a parallel between analysis of linguistic change and dialect studies, the one dealing with variability in time, the other variability in space. He suggests that the continuous evolution of a language is punctuated by moments of rapid change, manifested in significant changes in the relative frequency of different linguistic variables within a short period of time. Such moments, he argues, might be compared to dialectal bundles of isoglosses used by geographical dialectologists to delimit different dialects.[25] Caron then lists a range of mostly morphosyntactic variables, which, according to his analysis, are affected by three types of change in a short time within a defined sphere of linguistic practise ("good usage"):

>Scheme 1: the archaïc variant disappears completely (after a long period of gradual obsolescence) and the modern variant predominates[26]
>Scheme 2: the balance between the two variants of a variable suddenly changes in a dramatic way at the expense of the archaïc one
>Scheme 3: the two curves cross each other at that particular time

He concludes that linguists involved in diachronic studies should try to draw a diachronic map, so to speak, of this kind of "dramatic" boundary. But the main problem, he adds, lies in the choice of the relevant variables (what he terms "core variables"). We'll return to this point below.

In this paper, we wish rather to distinguish the different schemes outlined above, and to consider how the bundling of isochrones relates to the phase of change being considered in terms of the traditional S-curve pattern identified for linguistic change. Studies of change have repeatedly found that innovations initially spread slowly, reach a maximum rate at mid-course, and then slow down as they near completion, giving the classic S-curve. Indeed, Conde-Silvestre and Hernández-Campoy (2013) go as far as to consider it a "sociolinguistic universal".[27] As Dent shows (2012), there is some variation in the labels and percentages assigned to the different stages – and Heller and Macris, for example, prefer to identify four rather than five stages in language change – but there is general consensus as to the broad patterns (Table 1).

Heller, Macris (usage)	Garner (usage)	Biber et al. (grammar)	Labov (speech)	Nevalainen, Raumolin-Brunberg (language)
Innovation	Innovation of a variant	< 10%	Incipient	< 15%
Free variation	More common but still unacceptable	10%-25%	New and vigorous	15%-35%
Subtraction or addition begins	Commonplace but avoided by the careful	25%-50%	Mid-range	36%-65%
Resolution	Virtually universal, opposed by a few	50%-75%	Nearing completion	66%-85%
	Universally adopted except by 'eccentrics'	75% or 85%	Completed	> 85%

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[25] See below for further discussion of the relevant variables.

[26] Although the archaic variant may continue to survive in legal jargon or in a socio- or geo-lect.

[27] The idea that the time course of the propagation of language change typically follows an S-curve was outlined in the 1950s by Greenberg, Osgood and Sporta (in Osgood & Sebeok 1954) and recurs through the decades in many influential texts such as Weinrich, Labov & Herzog (1968: 113), Bailey (1973: 77), Kroch (1989: 202-203), Labov (1994: 65), and Croft (2000: 183); it has become established in handbooks (e.g. Chambers 2002) and classic works on historical sociolinguistics (e.g. Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg 2003). In a recent article Blythe and Croft (2012: 278-279) note that, of thirty-nine changes documented in the sociolinguistic literature, twenty-two, documented in both real and apparent time, can reasonably be fit to a full S-curve, and another thirteen can be interpreted as the beginning of an S-curve trajectory. A further three changes can be interpreted as following an S-curve trajectory that was interrupted. This is not to say that the notion has been totally uncontroversial, and Denison (1999, 2003), for instance, has questioned aspects of the model. In this paper we will similarly consider how appropriate it is for the changes we observe in our corpus.

Table 1: Comparison of five representations of the stages in language change (Dent 2012: 31)

In our study of periodization, we will consider whether there are particular moments – or period borders – when this classic pattern in the speed of change is disrupted, and whether this change of pattern contributes to the sense of 'rupture' or periodization.[28]

3. SOURCES FOR REFINING OUR NOTION OF PERIODIZATION

In this section we will first examine what contemporary observers had to say about language change and the notion of generation. This approach fits with Wright's (2013: 109) belief that "when we consider periodization, what speakers think about their language should not be ignored". We are interested in how far contemporary informants perceived continuities or discontinuities in language usage compared with the previous generation of writers. We will then present the corpus of texts we examine and offer our reasons for the choice of texts. We thus aim to adopt a twofold approach, bringing together material from metalinguistic texts (the viewpoint of contemporary observers) and a corpus of translations (linguistic data).[29]

3.1 Generational change and the remarqueurs

In this study we necessarily focus on the notion of *generational change*, as defined by Labov (1994: 84): "Individual speakers enter the community with a characteristic frequency for a particular variable, maintained throughout their lifetimes; but regular increases in the values adopted by individuals, often incremented by generations, lead to linguistic change for the community". Labov judges that this constitutes the normal type of linguistic change, notably for phonological and morphological change. This kind of change then implies that there are incremental shifts in the frequency of forms from one age group to another. By contrast, the pattern known as *communal change*, "where all members of the community alter their frequencies together, or acquire new forms simultaneously" (Labov 1994: 84), implies that speakers may also change their usage during their lifetimes. Labov proposes that this is a common pattern for lexical change. Recent work, notably on the history of English (e.g. Nevalainen & Raumoulin-Brunberg 2003; Raumoulin-Brunberg 2005, 2009), has, however, indicated that Labov's view does not hold categorically for all morphological changes in the history of English, and that generational change and communal change can, in fact, progress simultaneously; individuals do not cease to participate in linguistic change post-adolescence, but may indeed contribute to its advancement into adulthood. Tagliamonte and D'Arcy's 2007 study of the use of quotative *be like* in Toronto English is, however, interesting in suggesting that whilst post-adolescent speakers can enhance their use of a feature by increasing its frequency, they do not show signs of the more advanced state of the variable grammar. They conclude (2007: 213) that "adult forms of linguistic forms are labile, but the grammar underlying them is not". Moreover, in a subsequent article which shows that changes progress with a peak in adolescence, they note that, whilst speakers do not completely cease to participate in change, nevertheless "the notion of stabilization seems a legitimate facet of linguistic change within the speech community" (Tagliamonte & D'Arcy 2009: 100).[30] Since we are interested in identifying changes in the grammar of speakers over time, our decision to concentrate here on generational change seems, at least in part, justified.[31]

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[28] We are unable in the scope of this paper either to focus on the disputed question as to how change spreads or to consider our informants in terms of Roger's adopter categories (see, for instance Blythe & Croft 2012). It is possible that the *remarqueurs* represent 'Early adopters', since they were 'opinion leaders', respected by the rest of the community, but we would need far more comparative evidence before we could make any such claim with certainty.

[29] Wright (2013: 114) seems rather to place these two sources of evidence in opposition.

[30] Cf. Labov 2001: 446-447.

[31] It is, however, essential to bear in mind that the notion of generation is an idealized construct. Joseph and Janda (2003: 77) cite an article by J. Manly published in 1930 where he notes: "There is no such thing in reality as a succession of generations. […] The community is renewed and continued, not by successive generations, but by a constant stream of births."

What is particularly interesting from our point of view is that contemporary observers of usage appear highly aware of changes in the French language and indeed seem to view this in terms of different generations of writers. The texts to which we are referring are the different volumes of remarks and observations on the French language which were published notably in the second half of the seventeenth century in France (Ayres-Bennett & Seijido 2011). These are collections of short, often randomly ordered observations on French usage; they frequently deal with finer points of usage or *usage douteux* ('doubtful usage'), the questions on which even the best writers and speakers were apparently prone to error. The beginning of the genre – and perhaps also its apogee – is usually attributed to Vaugelas's *Remarques sur la langue françoise*, the first edition of which was published in 1647.[32] The focus on the spoken language of the royal court reflects the rise of a powerful monarchy and increasingly centralised government, whilst the social mobility of the *nouveaux riches* encouraged a new interest in linguistic perfection as a way of social integration into polite society. In addition, a dislike of pedantry favoured the form of short, randomly ordered observations – one of a number of *formes brèves* ('short forms') which flourished in the period – expressed in relatively non-technical language. For this study we rely particularly on the 15 volumes which are contained in the electronic database, the *Corpus des remarques sur la langue française (XVIIe siècle)* (Ayres-Bennett 2011).[33] The genre comprises a number of variants, but as regards the contents, the starting point is always a doubt or hesitation about good usage. The uncertainty may concern a problem of pronunciation (or more rarely spelling), morphological questions such as the correct choice of nominal gender or verb form, syntactic issues such as difficulties of grammatical agreement or word order, or lexical and semantic problems, and notably the choice of the correct word or expression according to the context, meaning and style. In other words, the *remarqueurs* tend to focus on peculiarities of French usage; where they do elaborate general rules or principles these are often based on the discussion of individual examples.

All the *remarqueurs*, from Vaugelas on, are highly interested in language change, conscious that their usages differ from those not only of the previous century but indeed from those of the first decades of the seventeenth century. Nearly a fifth of Vaugelas's observations are concerned with linguistic change, for example, and Gilles Ménage, as a Romanist and someone keenly interested in etymology is particularly interested in change. He thus frequently establishes a contrast between past and contemporary usage using such style labels as *ancien, anciennement, nos Anciens, autrefois* ('old', 'formerly', 'our ancestors', 'in the past'). Indeed, through his precise reference to literary usages, he often gives precise datings for the changes he is discussing. Furthermore, all the *remarqueurs* comment on the observations of their predecessors, making it a cumulative genre. For instance, Bouhours, who in many ways is Vaugelas's most faithful disciple, has a long observation entitled "En quoy il ne faut point suivre les Remarques de M. de Vaugelas" ('Where one should not follow M. de Vaugelas's remarks') (Bouhours 1692: 541-561), the majority of which aim to update Vaugelas's comments.

In his exemplification of 'good' and 'bad' usage, Vaugelas draws his material from French authors whose work falls broadly into three broad chronological periods, or generations: what we might term *anciens Escrivains* ('old writers'), *autheurs demi-modernes* ('semi-modern writers') and *nos modernes Escrivains* ('our modern writers') (Ayres-Bennett 2007).[34] The first group of 'old authors' apparently consists of those who flourished in the 1550s-1570s, such as Pierre de Ronsard (1524-1585) and Philippe Desportes (1546-1606). These authors are typically cited for their use of

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[32] Recently Douglas Kibbee has 'discovered' an earlier volume entitled *Remarques sur la langue françoise* by Jean de Wapy, published in Mousson in 1634, which constitutes part of the pre-history of the genre. For the subsequent history of the genre, see Caron 2004, Ayres-Bennett & Seijido 2011.

[33] The corpus comprises 1,513,389 words; 14,878,421 characters; 701,805 tags. Full bibliographic details of all the texts are included in the corpus. It contains 'classic texts' such as the volumes of observations by Claude Favre de Vaugelas, Dominique Bouhours, Gilles Ménage and Nicolas Andry de Boisregard, as well as criticisms, compilations and commentaries on earlier texts.

[34] This terms *anciens Escrivains* and *nos modernes Escrivains* are used by Vaugelas, whilst the expression *autheurs demi-modernes* is borrowed from Alemand (1688: 2), whom we will discuss below.

an outdated form or for creating incorrect or unnecessary words and expressions. For instance, Ronsard's use of *evesché* in the feminine is cited to illustrate past usage (Vaugelas 1647: 368), whilst his use of new words and expressions (along with that of Du Vair and "plusieurs autres grands personnages" ('several other great people'), which aimed to enrich the language, is criticised in the observation entitled '*Du barbarisme, premier vice contre la pureté*' ('On barbarisms, first fault against purity [of language]') (1647: 569-70).

Of particular interest amongst this group is Jacques Amyot (1513-1593), since he represents one of Vaugelas's earliest French authorities; typically for a period in which translations were often viewed as models of good style, he is particularly noted for his translation of Plutarch. References to Amyot are divided between those which emphasise continuity of usage since his time and those which note change. The discussion of the correct gender of *affaire* is an example of the first type:

> Ce mot est tousjours feminin à la Cour, & dans les bons Autheurs, je ne dis pas seulement modernes, mais anciens, Amyot mesme ne l'ayant jamais fait que feminin (1647: 246)

> ('This word is always feminine at Court and in good authors, I mean not only modern ones, but old ones, even Amyot never made it anything but feminine')

whilst the discussion of the correct construction with *servir* is an instance of the second type:

> *Servir*, regit maintenant l'accusatif, & non pas le datif comme il faisoit autrefois, & comme s'en sert ordinairement Amyot & les anciens Escrivains; Par exemple ils disoient, *il faut servir à son Roy, & à sa patrie*, pour dire *il faut servir son Roy, & sa patrie*, comme on parle aujourd'huy (1647: 479)

> ('*Servir*, now governs the accusative [*sc.* takes a direct object], and not the dative as it used to do, and as Amyot and the old authors usually use it ; For example they said, *il faut servir à son Roy, & à sa patrie*, for *il faut servir son Roy, & sa patrie*, as we now say')

As in the case of Ronsard, Amyot is seen as writing in a period of linguistic creativity, when *richesse* ('richness') was highly valued, and Vaugelas is at pains to emphasise that usage has changed since his time, notably in removing from the language "la moitié de ses phrases & de ses mots" ('half of his expressions and words') (1647: Preface X,1).

Turning now to Vaugelas's second group of writers, this appears to comprise authors who flourished in the 1600s-1620s and in particular Jacques Du Perron (1556-1618), François de Malherbe (1555-1628) and Nicolas Coëffeteau (1574-1632). In the case of both Malherbe and Coëffeteau, who are by far the most frequently cited writers in the *Remarques*, over half of the references point to them as authorities whose usage is to be followed. Coëffeteau, for instance, is particularly praised for the clarity of his syntax. However, there are also times when their usage is aligned with the "anciens" and contrasted with that of modern writers. For instance, Amyot and Coëffeteau, along with "tous les anciens", are said to have used the verb *magnifier*, which in Vaugelas's eyes has regrettably fallen out of usage (1647: 128-29). Vaugelas's attitude towards Malherbe is particularly complex, and his criticism of him is highlighted when we look at the only extant manuscript of the work, in which Vaugelas is not constrained by considerations of delicacy and tact as he is in the published text (Ayres 1983). In a manuscript observation devoted to the correct form of proper names, Vaugelas criticises Malherbe in terms which emphasise the outdated nature of his usage:

> Mais M. de Malh. en cela et en certaines autres façons de parler a fait comme les uieilles gents, qui bien que propres et s'habillants à la mode ne se sçauroient empescher de retenir tousious quelque chose du uieux temps. (Arsenal manuscript, fº 65rº)

> ('But Mr Malherbe in this and in certain other expressions acted like old people who, although they are clean and dress fashionably, cannot help retaining something of the old days')

The following comment on Coeffeteau is particularly interesting, since it seems to suggest that language may change over a period of 25-30 years, and that there is thus necessarily a difference between his usage and that of Vaugelas's day:

> *J'avoüe, que c'est la destinée de toutes les langues vivantes, d'estre sujettes au changement; mais ce changement n'arrive pas si à coup, & n'est pas si notable, que les Autheurs qui excellent aujourd'huy en la langue, ne soient encore infiniment estimez d'icy à vingt-cinq ou trente ans, comme nous en avons un exemple illustre en M. Coëffeteau, qui conserve tousjours le rang glorieux qu'il s'est acquis par sa Traduction de Florus, & par son Histoire Romaine; quoy qu'il y ait quelques mots & quelques façons de parler, qui florissoient alors, & qui depuis sont tombées comme les feüilles des arbres.* (Vaugelas 1647: Preface, X, 1)

> ('I admit that it is the destiny of all living languages to be subject to change; but this change does not occur so suddenly and is not so obvious, that authors who excel in the language today will not be infinitely valued 25 or 30 years hence, as we have a famous example in Mr Coeffeteau, who still retains the glorious reputation he acquired through his translation of Florus and his Roman History, although there are some words and phrases which were common then, and which have since fallen like leaves from a tree.')

The third category of sources comprises what Vaugelas terms "nos modernes Escrivains" ('our modern writers'), who are not individually named when they are the object of praise. We may perhaps assume that these are authors who were still alive and who were productive in the 1630s and 1640s. From references and allusions in the manuscript and published text, we can deduce that the majority of these were fellow members of the recently founded French Academy, and included such names as Jean Chapelain (1595-1674), Vincent Voiture (1597-1648), Valentin Conrart (1603-1675), Olivier Patru (1604-1681) or Nicolas Perrot d'Ablancourt (1606-1664). Vaugelas refers to 'modern' authors in about 30 observations. Sometimes one of their number is reproached for using an outdated form, but on the whole, as a group, they are cited positively in the *Remarques*: for instance, they are said to have avoided the old conjunction *premier que* (1647: 111) or the archaic preposition *devers* (1647: 172).

In his observations published in 1688, Louis-Augustin Alemand broadly adopts Vaugelas's chronology of change but brings it up to date. His own periodization is elaborated in relation to the stages he perceives in the reform of the French language (Alemand 1688: 1). The first period of the reform of French is associated with Du Perron (1556-1618), Malherbe (1555-1628), Bertaut (1552-1611), Coëffeteau (1574-1632), Desportes (1546-1606) and Amyot (1513-1593), the majority of whom were born in the 1540s or 1550s. The second reform of French is said to be particularly the work of Guez de Balzac (1594-1654) and Voiture (1597-1648), along with Vaugelas (1585-1650), Gombaud (c.1570-1666)[35], Le Vayer (1588-1672) and Sarrasin (1614-1654). These "demi-Modernes" constitute the next generation of writers, the majority of whom were born in the 1580s and 1590s. Alemand's third group is likewise termed "les Modernes", referring in his case presumably to authors flourishing in the 1670s and 1680s who are likely therefore to have been born in the early decades of the seventeenth century. Alemand's second group then represents those authors viewed broadly as Vaugelas's contemporaries. Once again Alemand emphasises the changes that have occurred between the three different periods; the second group are called "demi-Modernes":

> soit parce qu'il y a déja quelque temps que la plûpart d'eux sont morts; soit parce qu'effectivement il est arrivé depuis quelques changemens considérables en nôtre langue, laquelle par conséquent doit être considérée comme ayant eu differens aages par rapport à ces differens temps dans lesquels elle a été reformée, ce sont donc des Epoques qu'il faut necessairement remarquer dans l'examen que nous allons faire en tout ce Traité.

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[35] Given the strong connections members of this list have with the French Academy, it is likely that Alemand is referring here to Jean Ogier de Gombauld.

> ('either because it is already some time since the majority of them have died, or because indeed several major changes have occurred in our language, which as a result must be considered as having different ages in relation to the different times in which it was reformed, these are then the periods of which one must necessarily take notice in the analysis which we are going to conduct throughout this work.')

In short, both Vaugelas and Alemand have the strong sense that there have been major changes in the period between on the one hand the time of Malherbe, Coeffeteau and Du Perron who flourished in the period 1600-1620 and on the other hand the period represented by Vaugelas, Balzac or Voiture. These comments then perhaps explain why Vaugelas also talks about language change occurring over a period of 25 or 30 years. In other words, their comments seem to suggest that for contemporary observers of the language the period covered by 1600-1650 was far from representing a homogeneous 'état de langue'.

3.2 Corpus

In order to conduct our study, we needed to identify a suitable corpus of texts which satisfied certain conditions. First, it was important for the corpus to be as homogeneous as possible in terms of text type, genre and register so as to reduce to a minimum interference from parameters of variation other than time. Second, we required electronic versions which were philologically accurate. Unfortunately, there is something of a gap in the textual sources available for the history of French between, on the one hand, the medieval period for which there now exists a number of corpora created specifically for linguistic analysis[36] and, on the other hand, the modern and contemporary period. Of the corpora available the one which is most exploited by linguists is Frantext[37], initially created as a source of examples for a major reference dictionary of modern French, the *Trésor de la langue française*, and comprising mainly nineteenth- and twentieth-century literary texts. It has subsequently been greatly expanded to cover pre-classical and classical French, but there remain problems regarding the choice of editions and the rather unsystematic way in which it has developed. These difficulties led us to explore new sources of data and we were fortunate to discover a series of translations of the same Latin text, published within the chronological limits of our study and, as we shall see later, representing the successive generations of writers outlined above. The texts also had the advantage of belonging to the same genre of historical writing, for which the 'middle style' was deemed appropriate; in Ciceronian terms this means a style which sits between the ornateness of the grand style and the simple words and conversational manner of plain or low style. We discuss below the reasons for favouring translations.

Our corpus consists of successive translations of Quintus Curtius Rufus' Life of Alexander, an account in Latin of the life and deeds of Alexander the Great. The Latin text comprises ten books, of which the first two have been lost. Using a relatively clear and simple style, Quintus C. Rufus outlines the incredible campaign which saw the ruin of the Persian Empire and led Alexander from Greece to the banks of the Indus through Mesopotamia, the Persian Gulf and Persepolis, King Darius's capital. The text was highly influential in seventeenth-century France, probably because Alexander's reputation as the greatest king of antiquity struck a chord in contemporary France with its emerging absolute monarchy. Whilst a first French version of the text by Vasque de Lucène had already appeared around 1468, by the end of the sixteenth century it was considered to be written in Old French and thus almost impossible to understand.[38] We will exclude this first version from our corpus because it falls outside the chronological scope of our investigation.

The originality of our project lies in the fact that four different authors published five different French translations in close succession during the period under investigation (1598-1659). In 1598 Nicolas Séguier, born c. 1532 and raised in a well-known Parisian parliamentary family,

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[36] Notably the *Base de français médiéval* (http://bfm.ens-lyon.fr/), and the *Nouveau Corpus d'Amsterdam* (http://www.uni-stuttgart.de/lingrom/stein/corpus/).
[37] http://www.frantext.fr/.
[38] See the quotation below from Nicolas Séguier (1598).

but who had moved to be a pastor in Lausanne in 1594, published in Geneva the first edition of his translation, which was subsequently republished in two new posthumous editions dated 1614 and 1622. This was followed in 1629 by the publication of Nicolas de Soulfour's version (b. 1549 in Savoy), an Oratorian priest, who had died five years earlier. Ten years later, a third translation by Bernard Lesfargues appeared, who was born, according to the Bibliothèque nationale de France catalogue, at the beginning of the seventeenth century and who was a lawyer and/or possibly a printer in Toulouse.[39] He also published translations of Cicero and Seneca and was held in such great esteem that he was able to get his work published in prestigious publishing houses in Paris such as that of Camusat. Finally, two different versions of the translation by Vaugelas were published after his death. Vaugelas, an Academician born in Savoy in 1585, but who spent much of his life in polite Parisian circles and at the newly founded French Academy, worked on the translation for some thirty years, rewriting, correcting it and polishing it, but never apparently satisfied enough with it to send a final version to a publisher. Already in a letter to Vaugelas dated 10 July 1633 (Chapelain 1880: 41), Jean Chapelain expresses his eagerness to see the translation, and three years later, the writer Jean-Louis Guez de Balzac makes it clear that he has read at least part of the translation (Balzac 1665: I, 415), describing it as "inimitable".

The publishing history of Vaugelas's translation is complex (Ayres-Bennett & Caron 1996, Caron 2009). A first posthumous edition was published in 1653 thanks to the efforts of two fellow Academicians, Valentin Conrart and Jean Chapelain, who were apparently faced with three different manuscript copies. Whilst one of these was marked as having been revised on the model of Nicolas Perrot d'Ablancourt's translation of Arrian's life of Alexander (1646), it was in a confused and in places illegible state, and full of variants. After a second, essentially unchanged edition of 1655, a third and entirely new edition appeared in 1659, edited by Olivier Patru, another Academician, and apparently based on a new manuscript, which, it was claimed, had been discovered in the interim. This edition was said to be based on a single copy described as "much clearer and the one which the author considered definitive"[40], although there is also a suggestion that Patru engaged in active editorial work.[41] Even if this is the case, Conrart, Chapelain and Patru were all part of the same Academy milieu which was above all concerned with the elaboration of good usage. The third edition remained the basis of all subsequent editions of Vaugelas's text.

Pierre Du Ryer's preface to the translation states that when Vaugelas started on this translation around 1620[42], it was to Nicolas Coeffeteau, the translator of Florus's *Histoire romaine* (Coeffeteau 1615) that Vaugelas first looked for a model, imitating him initially "jusqu'à ses dêfauts" ('even in his failings'). Whilst Coeffeteau favoured a certain degree of freedom of translating, he was not yet part of the movement whose translations were known as *belles infidèles*[43]; moreover, Coeffeteau's changes generally involve elaboration of the original, the addition of words for the sake of harmony, to explain a passage or to add a commentary. In 1637 the first of Perrot d'Ablancourt's eleven translations was published and he was admitted to the Academy. Whilst it is clear that Vaugelas was already attracted by his early translations, Perrot d'Ablancourt's influence on him became decisive when he published his translation of Arrian's life of Alexander in 1646. On Vaugelas's own admission, this occasioned a complete revision of his

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[39] The available sources offer different information regarding his professional activities. Claude-Pierre Goujet in his *Bibliotheque françoise ou Histoire de la littérature françoise* (1741: 172) describes him as an "Avocat au parlement de Toulouse", whilst the Bibliothèque nationale de France lists him as a printer in Toulouse.

[40] "beaucoup plus nette, & qui estoit celle à laquelle l'Auteur vouloit s'arrester".

[41] "Et parce qu'en quelques endroits il [sc. Vaugelas] ne s'estoit pas encore déterminé, cette derniere Copie a été reveuë par Monsieur Patru, avec tant de soin & de zele pour la gloire de son amy".

[42] An earlier translation, a version of Cristóbal de Fonseca's *Discursos para todos los Evangelios de la Quaresma*, had appeared virtually unnoticed in 1615. It is probably an early juvenile exercise in translation.

[43] The label comes from Gilles Ménage who criticising d'Ablancourt's translations said that they reminded him of a woman he had greatly loved in Tours, "qui était belle mais infidèle" ('who was beautiful but unfaithful').

own translation.[44] In his translations Perrot d'Ablancourt's tended to cut the original, striving for concision and the elimination of any repetition.

The decision to use translations as our source texts might initially appear somewhat surprising. We offer two main justifications. Firstly, since the translators work from a single source text[45], they allow us to make a direct comparison of the French expression chosen. Naturally, great care is required in making such a comparison, since changes between the versions are not necessarily representative of changes in the language, notably at a time when freedom of translation was favoured. However, when, as we will show, numerous examples of a linguistic feature are all changed in the same direction, we can be reasonably confident that the authors were trying to reflect contemporary usage. It is significant that in their prefaces, each of them refers to previous translations and makes a conscious effort to make their own version distinctive. Thus Nicolas Séguier justifies in the *Avertissement* the need for his new translation in the following terms:

> & ayant rencontré ceste histoire d'Alexandre le grand composée par Quinte Curce tournee **en vieil Roman François**, **fort malaisé, voire quasi impossible à entendre**, & neanmoins descouvert en icelle une infinité de beaux exploits & strategemes de guerre, ce gentilhomme regrettoit mesveilleusement **l'obscurité de ceste histoire à cause du langage**, & souhaittoit que quelque François se voulut employer **pour la tourner en langage intelligible**, afin de pouvoir avoir la cognoissance des choses belles & rares qui y sont, mesmes me pria d'y mettre la main.[46]

> ('And having encountered this history of Alexander the Great composed by Quintus Curtius and translated **into Old French, which was very difficult, indeed almost impossible to understand**, and yet having discovered in it an infinity of fine deeds and war strategies, this gentleman greatly regretted **the obscurity of this history because of its language**, and wished that some Frenchman would wish to take the time **to transform it into intelligible language**, so as to be able to have knowledge of the fine and rare things in it, and indeed asked me to set to it.')

Séguier goes on to say that he favours the "common language" of the day. In his Preface to the 1629 translation Soulfour is equally conscious of the language changing:

> Bref (raison sans replique) voyans par une experience si advoüee, combien de fois le bien dire François a changé de visage, & de veritables beautez depuis cent ans, & cognoissans que les beautes (sic) passees, passent aujourd'hui parmi nous pour fades : Si le passé est une conjecture assez juste de l'advenir, nous devons croire que le bien dire d'aujourd'hui passera un jour pour mal-dire, ses beautez seront des laideurs.

> ('In short (an incontrovertible reason), seeing, as confirmed by experience, how many times the correct use of French has changed its face and its true beauty in the last hundred years, and recognizing that past beauties now seem faded to us, if the past is a reasonable indication of the future, we have to believe that what seems good usage today will one day seem bad, and what is beautiful will appear ugly.')

We suggest then that the translators were motivated at least in part by a desire to 'modernise' the previous translation.

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[44] As François (1904: 155) and Mossner (1927: 89) note, Vaugelas never entirely freed himself from Coeffeteau's influence nor totally adopted d'Ablancourt's techniques. For different views on the extent of d'Ablancout's influence on Vaugelas, see also Zeiler (1966: 52) and Zuber (1995 [[1]1968]: 125). Textual examples of d'Ablancourt's influence on Vaugelas can be found in Ayres-Bennett (1987: 150-157). Vaugelas also apparently borrowed certain turns of phrase from Soulfour.

[45] Of course, different versions of Quintus Curtius's Latin text circulated at the time, the text being held in high esteem. A comparison of three contemporary editions (Strasbourg, Schürer, 1518; Basel, Frober, 1545; Geneva, Stoer, 1597) showed, however, that the differences between them were not significant for our investigation, since the bulk of the text is identical, and the variants – based on the editor's choice between the different readings offered by the various manuscripts and previous editions – are only minor.

[46] Our emphasis. We have modernised throughout the use of u/v, i/j and resolved the tildes in the French quotations, but we have otherwise retained the original spellings.

A second justification is that, throughout this period, translation was held in the highest esteem and was considered complementary to grammar as a kind of 'applied grammar'. When Malherbe was asked by his friends to produce a grammar of French – something he never did, despite his influence in shaping linguistic ideology in seventeenth-century France – he referred them to his translations which he viewed as the best possible illustration of his ideas on good French usage. It is significant that the principal authors of volumes of remarks and observations on French were also translators, and cited translations extensively in their works.[47] There were over 40 editions of Vaugelas's translation in the period up to 1850, and such was its reputation as a model of good style that it was chosen as the subject for detailed linguistic commentary by the French Academy in 1720 (Ayres-Bennett & Caron 1996).[48] Finally, we should note that the three translators for whom we have a definite date of birth – Séguier, Soulfour and Vaugelas represent the three key generations identified by Vaugelas in his *Remarques*: respectively, the generation of Ronsard (b. 1524) or Montaigne (b. 1533), that of Malherbe (b. 1555), and Vaugelas's own generation (b. 1585).

As our sample, we selected Books 3 and 4 of the different translations, giving us a total corpus of 204,563 words. The choice of book was at least partly determined by the fact that books 3 and 4 were probably the last ones to be revised by Vaugelas before his death.

The different word count for each of the translations is in itself indicative of different translation policies, ranging from 34,491 words for Soulfour's 1629 translation to 59,038 words for Lesfargues's 1639 version. In fact, Lesfargues translation is particularly anomalous, since all the other translations are between 34,000 and 39,000 words.[49] We shall not make an extensive use of it for that reason. The difference in length between the two versions by Vaugelas (1653: 38,835 words; 1659: 35,715 words) confirms his general policy to replace Coeffeteau as his model with the more concise style of Perrot d'Ablancourt.

Electronic versions of books 3 and 4 of the translations were lemmatized and tagged for part of speech using Treetagger. The tagged versions were then checked manually; this allowed us to search more easily for certain, although not all, of our variables.

We are aware that a possible objection to our study is that the translators analysed could be 'atypical' in their linguistic behaviour. Nevalainen, Raumolin-Brunberg and Mannila (2011) found in their study of English letter-writers from the early 15th to the late 17th century that not only could individuals be generally 'progressive' or 'conservative' in relation to ongoing change, but also that the same individuals could participate to different degrees in parallel ongoing changes.[50] Further studies will be needed to rule the possibility of individual variability out completely, but there are mitigating factors in our study which make it less likely for our translators. First, Nevalainen, Raumolin-Brunberg and Mannila emphasise that they are looking at the period before prescriptivism, which makes it difficult to access linguistic attitudes. As we have already seen, our translators were highly conscious of – and took a position in relation to – language change. Second, they moved in a similar social milieu, and one, moreover, where linguistic questions were regularly discussed. The clearest case, of course, is Vaugelas, who, having left Savoy as a young man, frequented the Parisian salons and was a founder member of the French Academy. However, Séguier also belonged to the Parisian parliamentary elite, whilst Soulfour was an officer at the Court of Savoy before settling in Paris; he would have been conscious of the debates about good usage

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[47] See Ayres-Bennett & Seijido (2011: 245-247). On the relationship between Bouhours's work as *remarqueur*, polemicist and translator, see Ayme (2013), who argues that translations are where the "genius" of a language is particularly obvious. Butlen (2003: 196) also comments on the promotion of translation by the French Academy and its Secrétaire Perpétuel, Valentin Conrart.

[48] Despite the intrinsic interest of this commentary, we are not including it in our analysis here, since it falls outside the chronological scope of this study.

[49] 1598: 36,484 words; 1629: 34,491 words; 1639: 59,038 words; 1653: 38,835 words; 1659: 35,715 words.

[50] Cf. Tristram & Ayres-Bennett (2012), where it was equally found that certain authors, such as Calvin, showed rather atypical patterns of usage.

through his friendship with François de Sales, who was also acquainted with Vaugelas's family. We can be confident, then, that they all sought to adopt *le bon usage*.

We are conscious of two further objections which might be made to our approach: that the written language represents language change much later than it actually occurred in the spoken language and in an imperfect fashion[51], and that such a limited corpus in terms of genre is unable to tell us anything about how the change spread more generally. These concerns are valid and our study must be seen as preparing the way for other large-scale enquiries which will further test our hypotheses, particularly once new corpora of non-literary text types become available (see note 10 above). Our more modest aim is to consider how changes spread through the standard written language.

4. VARIABLES SELECTED

We decided to concentrate on morphosyntactic variables which provide a rich source of data for our analysis and are relatively easily accessible in a written corpus.[52] Phonetic variables, which are equally core, were nevertheless excluded because of the difficulties of identifying them in written texts. Lexical variants, the subject of extensive debate in our period, were also omitted from the analysis since, on the one hand, lexis is the most superficial and unstable part of the linguistic system and, on the other hand, the choice of lexical item is more likely to reflect stylistic and personal preferences. The focus was therefore on changes in inflectional morphology and the evolving use of grammatical forms and syntactic structures.

In order to determine which variables were salient at the period, and therefore candidates for our analysis, we once again turned to the evidence provided by the *remarqueurs*. We have already seen that they were particularly sensitive to changing usage. We therefore considered which areas of French morphosyntax were subject to a number of comments about evolving usage. As a result we identified the following features, which are those which can be analysed quantitatively:

(i)   *Verbal morphology*
        During the Middle French period much analogical levelling occurred, thereby reducing the amount of allomorphic variation in verb paradigms. In certain verbs and tenses, however, two or more variants for the same form survived into the late sixteenth century and beyond (e.g. *die / dise* for the 3rd person present subjunctive of *dire* ('to say'); *véquit / vécut* for the 3rd person past historic of *vivre* ('to live')), and this variation was the subject of considerable discussion by the *remarqueurs*.[53] Whilst a small number of these variants continue into modern French (e.g. *puis / peux* for the 1st person singular present indicative of *pouvoir* 'to be able'), the desire for one form / one meaning led to one of the forms either being lost completely from good usage or becoming restricted to a certain domain such as the law or, as in the case of *courre* as an alternative to *courir* for the infinitive of the verb 'to run', surviving only in a fixed context (*chasse à courre* for hunting). In certain cases the number of occurrences of the verb is too low in our corpus to draw conclusions,[54] and we focus particularly on the past historic forms of the verbs *prendre* ('to take') and *venir* ('to come').

(ii)   *Distinction of related forms or specialisation of grammatical categories*
        In Middle French, certain frequently-occurring morphemes could be used in a broader range of syntactic contexts than is possible today, and our period witnesses a marked

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[51] This is the old chestnut of Labov's 'bad data', and making the best of it (Labov 1972: 98). Written texts can only at best be a reflection of contemporary spoken usage. We consider that there is also interest in observing changes in written usage *per se*.

[52] This differs from Wright's (2013: 113) position since he considers syntactic criteria to be particularly unhelpful in determining periods, and places primary emphasis on orthographic changes.

[53] For instance, Vaugelas (1647) devotes around 25 of his 549 observations to this question.

[54] For example, there are no examples of the 3rd person present subjunctive of *dire*.

restriction or specialization of usage of these forms. For instance, in Middle French the form *chacun* ('each') could be employed not only as an indefinite pronoun but also as an indefinite adjective as in the well-known Renaissance song by Clément Janequin, *Le Chant des Oiseaux*, "Par traison **en chacun nid**,/ Pondez sans qu'on vous sonne" ('Treacherously in each nest, You lay without being called'). A much-discussed case, which we will analyse below, is the use of the forms *dans* 'in', *sur* 'on', *sous* 'under', etc. (today restricted to prepositional uses) versus the compound forms *dedans, dessus, dessous*, etc. (today restricted to adverbial contexts).[55] A different example is offered by the conjunctions *avant que* and *devant que*: whereas they could both be used with a temporal sense in Middle French ('before'), gradually *devant que* is restricted to spatial contexts, leaving *avant que* as the marker of temporality.

(iii)   *Reduction in the number of exponents of certain word (sub-)classes*
If in the above case, free variation is eliminated by assigning different functions to the variants, in a number of other cases, isomorphism is achieved by eliminating one of the variants. The preference for one form-one function is illustrated in a wide range of cases. For example, *parce que* and *pource que* were both used as causal conjunctions in Middle French, but the latter falls out of usage in our period. Similarly, *après*, *en après* and *par après* ('after') were all employed as adverbs, but the latter two decline in currency.

(iv)   *Coordinated structures*
Coordination is perhaps one of the most salient cases of change in our period. In Middle French, the syntagmatic cohesion of coordinated constructions was suggested by the non-repetition of function markers in the second part of a coordinated structure. For example, prenominal determiners or prepositions used before the first of two coordinated nouns were deemed to apply to both nouns, even if they were of different gender and therefore required a different form of the article. Thus, an example like *Sa vertu et courage est admirable* (feminine singular possessive + feminine singular N + and + masculine singular N + 3rd person singular V + singular adjective) was grammatical in Middle French. In our period this construction comes to be considered ungrammatical since the feminine possessive *sa* is no longer considered appropriate for the masculine noun *courage*. In addition, changes in stylistic preferences meant that binomials, favoured in sixteenth-century texts, came to be stigmatised as redundant or pleonastic.[56] Gradually the repetition of the function marker in the coordinated word or expression became compulsory, regardless of whether the form required in the coordinated part was different from or identical to the form occurring before the first element. Moreover, the two elements ceased to be viewed as one unit, meaning that singular agreement was also no longer tolerated. Thus, in Modern French, the grammatically correct form of our example is *Sa vertu et son courage sont admirables* (feminine possessive + (feminine) N + and + masculine possessive + (masculine) N + (pl) V + (pl) adj).

(v)   *Anaphora*
Anaphora, where a linguistic unit derives its interpretation from a previously expressed antecedent, plays an important role in textual cohesion. A number of different features are associated with changes in the expression of anaphora in French. First, certain anaphoric pronouns which were still quite common and idiomatic in late Middle French such as *ledit* ('the said')*, cettui / cestuy* ('that one') and *icelui* (the demonstrative pronoun with an initial *i*) disappear from good usage. Second, the compound relative

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[55] For instance, the different usages of *dans* and *dedans* are discussed by Vaugelas (1647), Macé (1651), Ménage (1675) and the Academy (1704).
[56] As we discuss below, this use of binomials is particularly associated with translations, especially in Middle French.

pronoun of the type *lequel* ('the which') is replaced by its simple equivalent *qui* in subject position.

(vi)   *Word order*
Whilst the order of the main syntactic constituents of the sentence became increasingly fixed in Middle French, a number of other important word order changes occurred in our period. The *remarqueurs*' obsession with clarity required what they considered to be a word order in which the elements are immediately comprehensible in their linear succession and all potential ambiguity is eliminated. We focus here on a much-discussed issue, the position of clitic pronouns.[57] Clitic climbing was usual in Old French, i.e. clitic pronouns appeared before the matrix verb:

> Je **le**   veux   faire
> I   it-OBJ want-PRS.1SG do-INF
> I want to do it

In Modern French this is no longer standard, and the clitic must be placed before the infinitive:

> Je veux   **le**   faire
> I   want-PRS.1SG it-OBJ do-INF

Here again one might contest the choice of variables which is based on the comments of contemporary observers of language usage. This decision means that we are necessarily focussing on variables which have reached a certain level of salience. We are of course not claiming that these were the only changes occurring in French usage at the time, or indeed that all changes necessarily followed the same chronology. However, this conscious selection meant that we avoided at least to some extent an arbitrary selection of variants or a focus on those variables discussed in previous studies. We hope our study will be complemented by other studies which perhaps adopt a more corpus-driven approach.

5. RESULTS
We start by presenting cases with a low number of occurrences in our texts (5.1-5.3) before turning to examples which are more frequently represented in our corpus (5.4-5.6).

5.1 Verb morphology
There are a large number of comments about verb morphology in the metalinguistic texts of the period. As Table 2 demonstrates, several of the questions are discussed throughout the century; the forms in bold indicate when only the 'modern' variant is recommended. Unfortunately, many of these concern forms which are too rare to say anything meaningful[58], and we therefore limit ourselves here to discussion of the past simple forms of *venir* and *prendre*.

In the case of *venir*, Vaugelas (1647: 97) judges that both *vinrent* and *vindrent* are acceptable, but that the former is far preferable and more used. While Malherbe used *vindrent*, Coeffeteau favoured *vinrent*, and this is the form which he claims is used by all those at Court and by the best modern authors. We considered all forms of the verb whether simple or as part of a derivation (*revenir, survenir*, etc.). Table 3 presents our results.

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[57] This includes the personal pronouns (*me, te, se, le, la, nous, vous, les*) and *y* and *en*. On the history of this construction, see Gougenheim (1974: 71), Haase (1935: 417-418), Fournier (1998: 80) and in particular Galet's detailed analysis (1971).
[58] Note, however, that the older forms in *lairr-* for the future and conditional of *laisser* are only attested in Soulfour (1629), and that only the forms with the modern stem *vesc-* occur in our corpus (in 1629, 1653 and 1659).

Verb forms	Vaugelas (1647)	La Mothe Le Vayer (1669 [1647])	Dupleix (1651)	Macé (1651)	Buffet (1668)	Ménage (1675 [1672], 1676)	Andry (1692 [1689], 1693)	Tallemant (1698)	Académie (1704)
Stem of the future tense of *laisser*: *lairr-/ laisser-*	**laisser-ai**			**laisser-ai**					**laisser-ai**
3rd person sing. past simple of *prendre*: *print/prit*	**Prit**		**prit**	**Prit**					**prit**
3rd person pl. past simple of *prendre*: *prinrent/prindrent/ prirent*	**Prirent**		**prirent**	**Prirent**					**prirent**
3rd person pl. past simple of *venir*: *vindrent/vinrent*	vinrent/vindrent			vinrent/vindrent		**vinrent**			**vinrent**
Stem of the present subjunctive of *dire*: *dis-/di-*	dis-e/di-e	**dis-e**		dis-e /di-e	di-e		dis-e/di-e		**dis-e**
3rd person sing. past simple of *vivre*: *vesquit/vescut*	vesquit/vescut		vesquit/vescut	vesquit/vescut	vesquit	vesquit/vescut	vesquit/vescut	**vescut**	**vescut**

Table 2: Verb morphology: a selection of morphological variants (*laisser*, *prendre*, *venir*, *dire*, *vivre*) and their treatement by the *remarqueurs*

	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
vindrent	5 (100%)	9 (100%)	1 (12.5%)	0 (0%)
vinrent	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (87.5%)	8 (100%)
Total occurrences	*5*	*9*	*8*	*8*

Table 3 : Occurrences of *vindrent*/*vinrent*

Whereas Séguier (1598) and Soulfour (1629) use exclusively the older form, Vaugelas prefers the modern variant, the sole example of *vindrent* in 1653 being replaced by *vinrent* in 1659:

(1)   Les gens de pied disposez comme en Croissant, avec la cavalerie sur les ailes, **vindrent** jusqu'au fil de l'eau sans beaucoup de peine, portant leurs armes sur leur teste (Vaugelas 1653 : 323)

('The foot soldiers arranged in a crescent shape, with the cavalry on the wings, came to the water's edge without much difficulty, carrying their arms on their heads')

(2)   Ayant donc disposé l'Infanterie en forme de croissant, et mis la cavalerie sur les ailes ils **vinrent** jusqu'au fil de l'eau sans beaucoup de peine; portant leurs armes sur leur teste (Vaugelas 1659 : 312)

('Having thus arranged the infantry in the shape of a crescent, and put the cavalry on the wings, they came to the water's edge without much difficulty, carrying their arms on their heads')

In the case of *prendre*, Vaugelas's verdict is more dogmatic: *print*, *prindrent* and *prinrent*, which were all formerly acceptable, are no longer tolerated and only *prit* and *prirent* are accepted in good usage. The results presented in Table 4 confirm this analysis. In the case of the singular forms, *print* is very marginal, even for Séguier (1598), whilst in the plural he alone favours the older form *prindrent*, and *prinrent* is not attested at all.

	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
3rd person sing.				
Print	1 (12.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Prit	7 (87.5%)	8 (100%)	16 (100%)	23 (100%)
Total occurrences	*8*	*8*	*16*	*23*
3rd person pl.				
Prinrent	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Prindrent	7 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Prirent	0 (0%)	3 (100%)	6 (100%)	8 (100%)
Total occurrences	*7*	*3*	*6*	*8*

Table 4: Occurrences of *print/prit* and *prinrent/prindrent/prirent*

In the case of *venir*, it is only after the publication of Soulfour (1629), but before the death of Vaugelas in 1650, that the modern form dominates; the recent nature of the change is underlined by the replacement of the sole instance of the archaic form by the modern form in the later edition of Vaugelas's translation. In the case of *prendre*, however, Soulfour's usage is already different from Séguier's, who is alone in recording the older forms. Whilst the rhythm of change is not the same for the two examples, it is clear that Séguier (1598) does not represent the same *état de langue* as Vaugelas.

Although the number of occurrences of these forms is low, if we group together on the one hand the archaic forms and on the other the modern ones (Table 5), we can see a very clear progression of the modern forms over our 60 year period, until in Vaugelas (1659) only these are attested.

	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
Archaic forms	13 (65%)	9 (45%)	1 (3.3%)	0 (0%)
Modern forms	7 (35%)	11 (55%)	29 (96.7%)	39 (100%)
Total forms	*20*	*20*	*30*	*39*

Table 5: Archaic verb forms vs modern verb forms

5.2 Distinction of related forms or specialisation of grammatical categories

In the sixteenth century, the forms *dedans* ('in'), *dessus* ('above'), *dessous* ('under'), etc. could be used as both prepositions and adverbs. Conversely, the simple forms *dans*, *sur*, *sous*, etc. could also be employed after the preposition *par*, a context where today only the first series are permitted (Gougenheim 1974: 140-141). Vaugelas (1647: 124-126) sets out modern usage in a long observation entitled '*Sur, sous*':

> Ces prepositions se doivent tousjours mettre simples, si ce n'est en certains cas que nous remarquerons. Je les appelle simples en comparaison des composées *dessus*, et *dessous*, que tout le monde presque employe indifferemment, et en prose, et en vers, pour *sur*, et *sous*. On en fait autant de quelques autres prepositions, comme *dedans*, *dehors*. Par exemple on dira, *Il est dessus la table*, *dessous la table*, *dedans la maison*, *dehors la ville*. Je dis que ce n'est pas escrire purement, que d'en user ainsi, et qu'il faut tousjours dire, *sur la table*, *sous la table*, *dans la maison*, et *hors la ville*, ou *hors de la ville*; car tous deux sont bons, et non pas *dessus la table*, *dessous la table*, *etc.* On le permet pourtant aux Poëtes, […] Mais en prose, tous ceux qui ont quelque soin de la pureté du langage, ne diront jamais, *dessus une table*, ny *dessous une table*; non plus que *dedans la maison*, ou *dehors la maison*. Il semble que ces composez soient plustost adverbes que prepositions; car leur grand usage est à la fin des periodes, sans rien regir aprés eux, puis qu'ils terminent la periode et le sens: […] Au lieu que les prepositions sont perpetuellement suivies d'un nom, ou d'un verbe, ou de quelque autre partie de l'Oraison, comme le porte le nom mesme de preposition.

> ('These prepositions must always be used in their simple form, except in certain cases which we will detail. I call them simple compared with the compound forms *dessus*, and *dessous*, which almost everyone uses indiscriminately, in prose and in verse, for *sur* and *sous*. The same is true for certain other prepositions, such as *dedans*, *dehors*. For instance, people will say, *Il est dessus la table*, *dessous la table*, *dedans la maison*, *dehors la ville*. In my opinion it is not correct [pure] to write like this, and you must always say *sur la table*, *sous la table*, *dans la maison*, and *hors la ville* or *hors de la ville* (for both of these are acceptable), and not *dessus la table* or *dessous la table*, etc. Poets may write like this […] but in prose, all those who are concerned with the purity of language will never say *dessus une table* or *dessous une table*, nor indeed *dedans la maison* or *dehors la maison*. It appears that these compound forms are adverbs rather than prepositions; for they are particularly used at the end of sentences, without anything following them, since they complete the sentence and the meaning […] Whereas the prepositions are always followed by a noun or a verb or some other part of speech, as the very name preposition implies.')

Vaugelas goes on to add certain exceptions, for instance when the form is preceded by another preposition such as *par*, the correct form is *par dessus*, *par dedans*, etc. and not *par sur* or *par dans*.

Analysis of usage in the translations reflects the changes outlined by Vaugelas, although it is clear that not all of the forms change at the same rate (Table 6). In all cases Vaugelas adopts the modern usage. In the case of *dessus* and *dessous*, the older prepositional usage is attested occasionally in Séguier and Soulfour, but as a very minor, undoubtedly archaic, variant, and there are no examples of *dehors* as a simple preposition. On the other hand, prepositional *dedans* seems to have survived much longer. Séguier (1598) contains not a single example of *dans*, whereas there is a total of 85 occurrences of *dedans*.

	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
dedans + N/pro	69 (100%)	50 (33.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
dans + N/pro	0 (0%)	101 (66.9%)	176 (100%)	174 (100%)
Total occurrences of dedans/dans + *N/pro*	*69*	*151*	*176*	*174*
dessus + N/pro	0 (0%)	17 (10.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
sur + N/pro	144 (100%)	149 (89.8%)	166 (100%)	147 (100%)
Total occurrences of dessus/sur + *N/pro*	*144*	*166*	*166*	*147*
dessous + N/pro	1 (8.3%)	1 (11.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
sous + N/pro	11 (91.7%)	8 (88.9%)	30 (100%)	21 (100%)
Total occurrences of dessous/sous + *N/pro*	*12*	*9*	*30*	*21*
dehors + N/pro	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
hors + N/pro	9 (100%)	12 (100%)	11 (100%)	12 (100%)
Total occurrences of dehors/hors + *N/pro*	*9*	*12*	*11*	*12*

Table 6: Occurrences of the forms as simple prepositions

Dedans is used not only as an adverb (10 examples) and when preceded by another preposition (6 examples) as recommended by Vaugelas, it is also employed as a preposition (69 examples) as in the following contexts:

(3)   il entra **dedans** le temple de Jupiter (Séguier 1598 : 29)
        ('he went into the temple of Jupiter')

(4)   il se mit **dedans** le fleuve (Séguier 1598: 29)
        ('he went into the river')

In the case of Soulfour, we find variation between use of *dans* and *dedans* in prepositional contexts: there are 101 examples of *dans* compared with 55 of *dedans* of which 50 are as a preposition. In other words, *dans* has now become twice as common in the prepositional usage as *dedans*, but this still remains as a minor, but important, alternative. Thus if we look at the examples above, the first of these remains unchanged in Soulfour, whereas in the second he substitutes the modern form:

(5)   entra **dedans** le temple de Jupiter (Soulfour 1629 : 145)
        ('went into the temple of Jupiter')

(6)   il se lança **dans** la riviere (Soulfour 1629 : 162)
        ('he threw himself into the river')

In his own translations, Vaugelas follows his recommendation and modern usage is observed throughout. In the 1653 edition there are 176 examples of *dans*, and the 10 uses of *dedans* are never as a preposition. In the 1659 just six examples of *dedans* remain, because an adverbial usage in 1653 has been replaced by either a prepositional structure or a pronoun:

(7)   a.   Le Roy, trouvant la ville abandonnée, **entra dedans** (Vaugelas 1653: 207)
               ('The King, finding the town abandoned, went in')

        b.   Le Roy entra **dans la ville** abandonnée des habitans (Vaugelas 1659: 207)
               ('The King went into the town [which had been] abandoned by its inhabitants')

(8)   a.   Mais il ne fut pas si tost **dedans**, qu'[…] (Vaugelas 1653: 225)
               ('But he was no sooner inside, than…')

> mais il n'**y** fut pas si tost qu'[…] (Vaugelas 1659: 223)
>
> ('But he was no sooner there than…')

In short, Séguier's text represents the older usage, Soulfour's illustrates variation, albeit with a preference for the modern form, whereas Vaugelas uses only the modern form.

A different case – but which still involves distinguishing the grammatical function of terms which had been previously used interchangeably – concerns the use of *chaque/chacun* and *chacun/un chacun* to express the meaning 'each'. In an observation which apparently already appeared outdated to Vaugelas in 1647, and which was therefore only published posthumously by Alemand[59], concerns the distinction between *chacun* and *chaque*:

> *Chacun* n'est jamais adjectif: on ne dit point *chacune Langue a ses propriétez;* mais *chaque Langue:* car *chaque* est toûjours adjectif. Néanmoins M. de Malherbe dit *par chacun jour,* mais mal, ce me semble. (Vaugelas 1690: 107)

> ('*Chacun* [each] is never an adjective: one does not say *chacune Langue a ses propriétez* [each language has its properties], but rather *chaque Langue* [each language], since *chaque* is always used adjectively.')

In 1689 Andry de Boisregard confirms that, in subject position, *chacun* is much better for the pronominal form than *un chacun* (1692 [[1]1689]): 707). In this case, Séguier alone uses the older forms in our translations (Table 7):

		Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
Adjectival usage	*Chacun*	1	0	0	0
	Chaque	0	2	1	2
Pronominal usage	*Un chacun*	19	0	0	0
	Chacun	5	31	15	13

Table 7: Usage of *chaque/chacun/un chacun*

Whilst the figures are too small to say anything conclusive, the rapid change in usage between Séguier and Vaugelas is nevertheless interesting.

Our third example concerns the conjunctions *avant que* and *devant que* to express the temporal meaning 'before'. Vaugelas (1647: 319) expresses a preference for *avant que* in this function (so that *devant que* is restricted to the spatial meaning), and the reference to Coeffeteau's usage clearly suggests that there is a change in progress: "Tous deux sont bons, M. Coeffeteau a tousjours escrit *devant que*, mais *avant que*, est plus de la Cour, & plus en usage' ('Both are acceptable, M. Coeffeteau always wrote *devant que*, but *avant que* is more associated with the Court and is more in usage'). In his own usage, he in fact only uses *avant que*, in contrast with Séguier who only employs *devant que*:

	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
Devant que	10	0	0	0
Avant que	0	5	6	8

Table 8: *Devant que / avant que*

Here again, then, we have evidence of rapid change.

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[59] A number of observations which are found in the manuscript of Vaugelas's remarks are not published in 1647, perhaps because they were considered outdated or unnecessary by the time of publication. In 1690, Louis-Augustin publishes these as if they were 'new' remarks by Vaugelas (Vaugelas 1690).

5.3 Reduction in the number of exponents of certain word (sub-)classes

There are a significant number of comments by our contemporary observers which concern the loss of one or more of variants which had been used interchangeably in the sixteenth century. These changes reflect the increased move towards isomorphy, or the preference for one form – one function. We will discuss two examples here, one from the class of subordinating conjunctions, the other adverbs.

In both instances, changing usage is recorded by contemporary metalinguistic texts. In the case of the causal conjunctions *parce que* and *pource que* ('because'), Vaugelas (1647: 47) observes that they are both acceptable, but that the former is "plus doux, et plus usité à la Cour, et presque par tous les meilleurs Ecrivains" ('sounds nicer and is more used at Court and by nearly all the best writers'). In the case of the adverb *par après, en après, après* his judgment is stronger: he observes that the first two are now archaic and that *après* alone is the only acceptable form (Vaugelas 1647: 223). In both examples there is a striking advance of the modern form between the usage of Séguier and Vaugelas:

	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
Pource que	45 (100%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Parce que	0 (0%)	18 (94.7%)	39 (100%)	39 (100%)
Total occurrences	*45*	*19*	*39*	*39*

Table 9: *Pource que / parce que*

	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
Par après	34 (60.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
En après	6 (10.7%)[60]	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Après	16 (28.6%)[61]	15 (100%)	30 (100%)	34 (100%)
Total occurrences	*56*	*15*	*30*	*34*

Table 10: *Par après / en après / après*

5.4 Coordinated structures

As noted in section 4, there is a marked change in our period in what is permitted in coordinated structures. In particular, the repetition of function markers before the second of two coordinated heads (nouns or verbs) comes to be considered more and more obligatory.

The saliency of this change is evidenced by the number of observations and remarks devoted to this question by the *remarqueurs*. Vaugelas, for instance, has over twenty remarks on coordination. In certain cases he establishes the principle that the function marker must be repeated before the second of two coordinated elements: this is true for articles preceding nouns (**les faveurs & les graces** *sont si grandes* ('the graces and favours are so great') and not **les faveurs & graces** *sont si grandes*), for adverbial *si* before coordinated adjectives (*vous estes* **si sage & si avisé** ('you are so sensible and so wise') and not *vous estes* **si sage & avisé**), and for the clitic object pronoun before coordinated infinitives (*envoyez moy ce livre pour* **le revoir & l'augmenter** and not *pour* **le revoir & augmenter**, 'send me the book to revise [it] and augment it').[62] In other cases, however, he allows greater flexibility, arguing that repetition is not required if the two coordinated heads are synonyms or near synonyms, and is only compulsory if the heads are antonyms or have a different meaning: this 'synonym rule' is said to hold for the repetition of prepositions before coordinated nouns or verbs, for articles in coordinated superlative constructions, for possessives before coordinated nouns and for the repetition of *tout* ('all') before coordinated nouns.[63] According to the synonym rule, whereas it is obligatory to repeat the preposition in the case of *par les ruses & par les armes de mes ennemis* ('by the cunning and the arms of my enemies'), because *ruses* and *armes*

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[60] Always sentence initial.

[61] Includes three examples of *incontinent après* ('immediately after') and one of *un peu après* ('a little later').

[62] Vaugelas (1647: *474-*477, *490-*491, 195).

[63] Vaugelas (1647: 50-51, 214-218, *477-*480, 519-520, 559-561).

are neither synonyms nor near-synonyms, when *ruses* is coordinated with *artifices*, a term which is considered synonymous, then repetition of the preposition is no longer necessary (*par les ruses & artifices de mes ennemis*, 'through the ruses and subterfuges of my enemies').

Following Vaugelas, the *remarqueurs* become less and less tolerant of ellipsis, and there is a trend towards a preference for repetition in all contexts. This tendency is already evident in the comments of Andry de Boisregard and Bouhours, who criticises, for example, the expression *d'où viennent **tous** vos troubles et vos peines d'esprit* ('from where do all your troubles and your tourments of the mind come?', Bouhours 1693: 314), arguing that it should be ***tous** vos troubles et **toutes** vos peines d'esprit*. By the time the French Academy published its observations in 1704 systematic repetition of the function markers is required in virtually all contexts.[64]

Another case discussed by the *remarqueurs* concerns whether the repetition of the subject pronoun is required before coordinated verbs. Vaugelas considers ellipsis of the pronoun before the second verb elegant except in two specific contexts: when there is a change of construction and when the coordinating conjunction is a disjunctive conjunction such as *mais* ('but') or *ou* ('or'), since this "breaks the link with the preceding construction and requires a new one" (1647: 421). Thus he is happy to accept, for instance, *nous avons passé les rivieres les plus rapides, & pris des places que l'on croyoit imprenables, & n'aurions pas fait tant de belles actions, si nous estions demeurez oisifs, &c.* ('we passed the fastest rivers and took the places which were thought to be impossible to take, and would not have carried out such fine actions, if we had remained idle, etc.'). In this example, it is not, in his view, necessary to repeat *nous avons* before *pris* or *nous* before *n'aurions*. Here again, the Academy (1704: 416) tends to favour systematic repetition, whatever the context.

In a precursor to our study, Janine Baudry (in Combettes 2003) examined coordination in a corpus of travel narratives dating from 1558-1636. The non-repetition of function markers, notably when the two coordinated elements are synonymous, has been associated with translations from Latin into French, where the use of binomials is said to be a means of introducing a new French word calqued from Latin which was then coordinated with an existing, more familiar, term to gloss and thus explain it (Rickard 1968: 13). From this initial motivation, it appears that the use of binomials became something of a stylistic stereotype. Baudry cites a vivid example of such usage from a travel memoir by Bénard, dating from 1621:

> A ce propos Ovide dit que le **Nautonier Patron ou Pilote** mesprisant sa vie, **est assujecty & se captive** à **la fureur & inconstance** des ondes **poussées & agitées** par **l'affreux & espouvantable** soufflement des **vents & orages**, au **gré & volonté** desquels le vaisseau voguant ça et là, à tous coups & sillons de mer est prest d'estre englouty au profond de ses abymes. (Combettes 2003: 150)

> ('On this question Ovid says that the **chief or pilot seaman**, despising his own life**, is subject and slave** to **the ferocity & inconstancy** of the waves which are **pushed and agitated** by the **horrible and dreadful** gusts of the **winds and storms**, according to whose **will and pleasure** his vessel, floating here and there, is close to being swallowed in the deep of its abyss by the beatings and troughs of the sea.')

This style, so typical of Middle French, was probably already somewhat archaic by the time Bénard was writing; the integration of the Latin calques into the French lexicon meant that the addition of a second term was no longer necessary to gloss them.[65] What is interesting from our viewpoint is the fact that after around 1625, the rate of ellipsis of the determiner or preposition before the second coordinated noun seems to drop dramatically:

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[64] Académie française (1704: 486, 506, 508, 543, 579). The only exception for the Academy concerns the repetition of preposition which it still considers optional in the case of coordinated synonyms, but not in the case of near-synonyms (1704: 61).

[65] Baudry's (Combettes 2003: 141) analysis of the number of coordinated noun phrases per 10,000 words in her corpus does not, however, indicate a sudden decline in their usage, and suggests rather that it is a stylistic trait favoured more or less by individual writers (Thevet (1558): 97; Léry (1578): 58 ; Champlain (1603): 41 ; Biard (1616): 102 ; Bénard (1621): 139; L'Allemant (1627): 28; Le Jeune (1632): 45; Brébeuf (1636): 69.

Thevet 1558	Léry 1578	Champlain 1603	Biard 1616	Bénard 1621	L'Allemant 1627	Le Jeune 1632	Brébeuf 1636
78%	44%	68%	64%	82.5%[66]	8%	18%	34%

Table 11: Rate of ellipsis of the determiner or preposition before the second of two coordinated nouns (Baudry in Combettes 2003)

These findings suggest that it would be wrong to attribute the decline in ellipsis of function markers in coordinated structures to the work of the *remarqueurs*, who did not begin publishing until 1647.

For our analysis we decided to focus on four commonly occurring types of coordinated structures[67]:

  a) Noun Phrases: Ellipsis or repetition of the determiner before the second (or subsequent) N, as in *aux Bactrians, Sogdiens, Indiens* (Séguier 1598: 32) vs *aux Bactrians, **aux** Sogdiens, **aux** Indiens* ('to the Bactrians, [the] Sogdians, [the] Indians').
  b) Finite clauses: Ellipsis or repetition of the subject before the second verb, as in *il entra dans le temple de Jupiter, & regarda le chariot* (Séguier 1598: 29) vs *il entra dans le temple de Jupiter, & **il** regarda le chariot* ('he went into the temple of Jupiter and [he] looked at the chariot').
  c) Infinitival clauses: Ellipsis or repetition of the function marker before the second infinitive, as in *pour commander aux troupes, & chasser les garnisons des ennemis* (Séguier 1598: 30) vs *pour commander aux troupes, & **pour** chasser les garnisons des ennemis* ('to command the troops and [to] chase the enemies from the garrisons')
  d) Subordinate clauses: Ellipsis or repetition of the relative pronoun *qui* or *que* ('who, which') or of the conjunction *que* ('that') before the second subordinate clause, as in *quoi qu'il lui demandast pardon, & lui conseillast choses qui* […] (Séguier 1598: 34) vs *quoi qu'il lui demandast pardon, & **qu**'il lui conseillast choses qui* […] ('although he asked him forgiveness and [although he] advised him of things which […]')
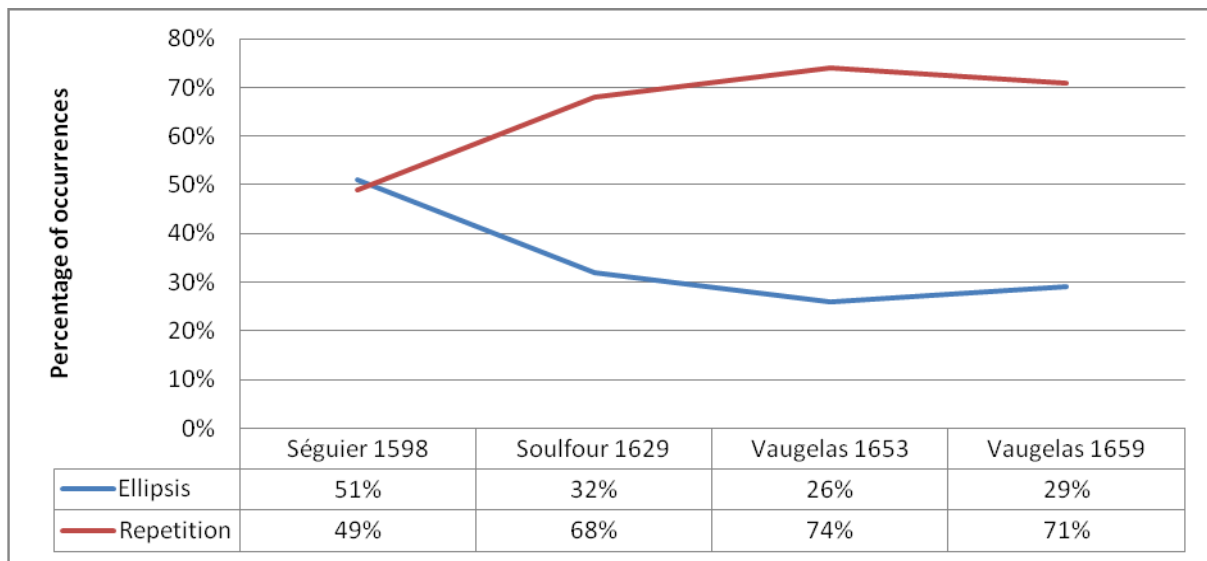
In each case, only those examples where the coordinator *et* ('and') joined segments belonging to the same part of speech were selected (e.g. NP *et* NP, VfC *et* VfC, InfC *et* InfC), and where the function marker[68] was deemed to apply to both of the coordinated elements. For each of the four texts, the first hundred cases of coordinated structures were selected. The results are set out in Table 12:

	Séguier 1598		Soulfour 1629		Vaugelas 1653		Vaugelas 1659	
	Ellipsis	Repetition	Ellipsis	Repetition	Ellipsis	Repetition	Ellipsis	Repetition
NPs	12 (33.3%)	24 (66.7%)	5 (10.4%)	43 (89.6%)	2 (4.9%)	39 (95.1%)	1 (2.2%)	44 (97.8%)
Finite clauses	32 (72.7%)	12 (27.3%)	24 (70.6%)	10 (29.4%)	18 (60%)	12 (40%)	21 (70%)	9 (30%)
Inf-clauses	2 (33.3%)	4 (66.7%)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2 (20%)	8 (80%)	1 (14.3%)	6 (85.7%)
Subordinate clauses	5 (35.7%)	9 (64.3%)	2 (12.5%)	14 (87.5%)	4 (21.1%)	15 (78.9%)	6 (33.3%)	12 (67.3%)
TOTAL	51	49	32	68	26	74	29	71
Percentage	**51%**	**49%**	**32%**	**68%**	**26%**	**74%**	**29%**	**71%**

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[66] Bénard's usage seems to be conservative in almost all respects.

[67] The case of the repetition of the adverb *si* before coordinated adjectives was not included, for instance, because the number of occurrences was so low.

[68] Prepositions before coordinated nouns and infinitives, pronoun subjects before coordinated verbs, determiners before coordinated nouns.

Table 12: Rate of ellipsis vs repetition of common markers in four different syntactic contexts

	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
Ellipsis	51%	32%	26%	29%
Repetition	49%	68%	74%	71%

Figure 1: Overall rate of ellipsis vs repetition of common markers in four syntactic contexts

The general tendency is a change in the balance between ellipsis and repetition, as is shown in Figure 1. Séguier stands apart from his successors in retaining a broadly 50/50 distribution of the variants, whereas Soulfour and Vaugelas display a similar reduction of ellipsis to less than a third of the total. However, closer analysis suggests that not all contexts behave identically. The number of occurrences for our last two contexts is probably too low to draw any firm conclusions. In the case of finite clauses, the ellipsis of the pronoun subjects remains predominant. It is therefore the behaviour of NPs which is really striking in that, after Séguier for whom ellipsis is still common (constituting one third of the total), the percentage reduces to around 10% for Soulfour and to below 5% for Vaugelas. We therefore decided to enlarge the sample of NPs to 100 occurrences and to create three different subtypes:

(i)   coordinated NPs with a determiner potentially common to the two segments
(ii) coordinated NPs with a preposition potentially common to the two segments
(iii) coordinated NPs with both determiner and preposition potentially common to the two segments

The variable was therefore ellipsis vs repetition of the common marker(s) in the second segment of the coordination. The results are presented in Table 13 and Figure 2:

	Séguier 1598		Soulfour 1629		Vaugelas 1653		Vaugelas 1659	
	Ellipsis	Repetition	Ellipsis	Repetition	Ellipsis	Repetition	Ellipsis	Repetition
NPs + Det	20	22	7	38	1	38	2	35
NPs + Prep	15	37	6	31	2	48	1	54
NPs + Det + Prep	5	1	2	16	0	11	0	8
TOTAL	40	60	15	85	3	97	3	97
Percentage	**40%**	**60 %**	**15%**	**85 %**	**3%**	**97%**	**3%**	**97%**

Table 13: Rate of ellipsis vs Repetition of common markers in a sample of 100 NPs
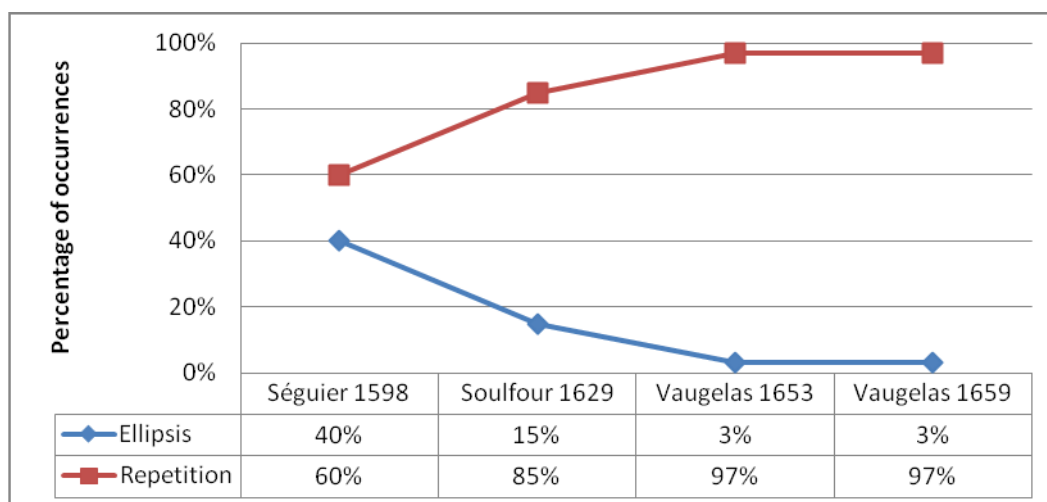
Figure 2: Rate of ellipsis vs Repetition of common markers in a sample of 100 NPs

The first thing to note is that Séguier's text provides just two examples of ellipsis where the two coordinated nouns are of different gender or number, a feature which was common in Renaissance French. In example (9a), the masculine indefinite article *un* is used for both the masculine noun *orgueil* and for the feminine noun *avarice*; Soulfour (1629) and Vaugelas (1653) choose a different construction, but Vaugelas (1659) uses the modern construction with the repetition of the determiner (9b):

(9) a.   avec **un** trop grand orgueil et avarice (Séguier 1598: 113)
        'with too much pride and avarice'

    b.   à cause **de leur** avarice et **de leur** orgueil (Vaugelas 1659: 43)
        'because of their avarice and their pride'

Similarly, in example (10), whereas Séguier uses the masculine definite article for both the masculine noun *salut* and the feminine noun *liberté* (10a), all the other translators insert *la* before the second noun (10b),(10c):

(10) a.   pour **le** salut et liberté de la Grece (Séguier 1598: 105)
        'for the safety and freedom of Greece'

    b.   pour **le** salut et pour **la** liberté des Grecs (Soulfour 1629: 245)
        'for the safety and for the freedom of the Greeks'

    c.   pour **le** salut et **la** liberté de la Grece (Vaugelas 1653: 299; 1659: 290)
        'for the safety and the freedom of Greece'

It is clear from the paucity of these examples that this morphosyntactic usage is virtually obsolete, even for Séguier. In other words, for all our translators, ellipsis usually requires that the grammatical markers of the two forms are morphologically identical.

That said, the change in usage of this variable as set out in Table 13 is striking. As in other cases analysed in this article we find, contrary to what is commonly stated about the relative speed of change in different phases of the S-curve – swift change in the middle phases, slower change initially and in the final stages – what appears to be a somewhat atypical pattern. In the space of 60 years, usage changes from ellipsis still being employed two-fifths of the time in Séguier (1598) to repetition being virtually categorical in Vaugelas; in other words, we witness a rapid collapse in the frequency of the archaic variant.

Another related question arises from the evidence provided by the *remarqueurs*: to what extent does synonymy play a role in the persistence of ellipsis? If we analyse the contexts in which

Séguier chooses ellipsis, we find that there are certain semantic factors which indeed seem to favour ellipsis, without categorically triggering it. Ellipsis in the case of semantic similarity of the coordinated terms is one such case, as the following examples from Séguier demonstrate:

(11)   a.   sa mignardise, & delicatesse (Séguier 1598: 37)
                ('its daintiness and delicacy')

        b.   de rapines & larcins (Séguier 1598: 61)
                ('from plundering and thefts')

        c.   Car il lui prenoit de grandes foiblesses & defaillances (Séguier 1598: 48)
                ('for he was struck by great weakness and fragility')

        d.   Ces beaux champs, & riches campagnes des Perses (Séguier 1598: 61)
                ('these fine fields and rich countryside of the Persians')

Such cases which are apparently governed by the semantic relatedness of the terms tend to become obsolete, since they come to be considered pleonastic.

A related case concerns words belonging to the same notional field (for instance, human relations, *Les femmes de ses parens & amis* 'the wives of his relatives and friends'), but again semantic similarity does not necessarily entail ellipsis. If in the following set of examples, we find ellipsis:

(12)   a.   Les ravissemens, & violemens n'y estoient pas espargnés (Séguier 1598: 66)
                ('Abductions and rapes were not spared there' – acts of cruelty to women)

        b.   la licence, & cruauté du victorieux (Séguier 1598: 66)
                ('the licentiousness and cruelty of the victor' – misdeeds)

        c.   leur courroux & douleur (Séguier 1598: 69)
                ('their anger and sorrow' – negative emotions)

We equally find examples where this is not the case:

(13)   a.   une compagnie de tireurs de fondes, & d'archers (Séguier 1598: 59)
                ('a company of slingers and archers')

        b.   autant de cœur & de pieté (Séguier 1598: 63)
                ('as much heart and piety')

        c.   Il s'est monté aussi chaste à l'endroit des vierges & des reines (Séguier 1598: 71)
                ('He was equally chaste towards the virgins and the queens')

There are also certain notions which seem to favour ellipsis in Seguier's corpus such as names of nations, countries or islands:

(14)   a.   ayant mis ordre aux affaires de la Lycie & Pamphilie (Séguier 1598: 27)
                ('having established order in the affairs of Lycia and Pamphylia')

        b.   en Lesbos, Chios & Cos (Séguier 1598: 30)
                ('in Lesbos, Chios and Kos')

        c.   Quant aux Bactrians, Sogdiens, Indiens […] (Séguier 1598: 32)
                ('As for the Bactrians, Sogdians, Indians […]')

However there are counterexamples with the 'modern' pattern, showing that the system is flexible:

(15)   a.   une troupe de Phrygiens, & de Macedoniens (Séguier 1598: 29)
               ('a troop of Phrygians and Macedonians')

      b.   les roches coupees d'Esclavonie et de Thrace (Séguier 1598: 60)
               ('the hewn rocks of Sclavonia and Thrace')

In cases of strict or near synonymy, close semantic similarity sometimes suggests that the two nouns are considered co-referential. Over the following decades use of such binomials comes to be viewed as superfluous and these co-referential cases of coordination thus disappear. Vaugelas's usage indicates that this decline is already well underway in the 1640s.

5.5 Anaphora
Our analysis focuses on two categories, demonstratives and relative pronouns.

5.5.1 Demonstratives
In the case of demonstratives, Middle French constituted a major period of change from the system inherited from Old French (Martin & Wilmet 1980: 118-121, Marchello-Nizia 2004), where the forms of the series *cist* (< Latin *iste*) referred to the 'speaker's sphere' as opposed to the series *cil* (< Latin *ille*) which did not. In Middle French this opposition of deictic function is replaced by one of grammatical function, whereby the first series comes to function as determiners, and the second becomes restricted to the pronominal function. In order to express the lost deictic opposition, the postposed particles –*ci* and –*là* become increasingly used.

5.5.1.1 Determiners
At the beginning of our period, the masculine anaphoric form is *ce* before a noun beginning with a consonant and *cest* pre-vocalically, and the feminine form is *ceste* as in the following example from Séguier (1598: 31)

> **Toutes les compagnies**, selon qu'elles estoyent enrolees, entrerent dedans ce rampart, depuis le soleil levant, jusques au couchant. Et de la**, toute ceste troupe** presque innumerable de gens de cheval & de pied, estant renvoyée, se respandit par la campagne de Mesopotamie, de telle façon, qu'il n'y avoit pas apparence qu'elle se peut nombrer.

> ('**All the companies**, according to how they had enrolled, entered this rampart from sunrise to sunset. And **this whole troop** comprised of almost innumerable horsemen and foot soldiers having been repelled from there, spread throughout the countryside of Mesopotamia in such a way that it no longer seemed possible to count its number.')

The grammarian Maupas (1618: f° 68v°-69r°) reports variation between *cest* and *cet* for the masculine form which occurs pre-vocalically, and *ceste* and *cette* for the feminine form, with the masculine pre-consonantal form remaining as *ce*. For him the opposition between the two forms has become purely orthographical:

> Nous escrivons et prononçons *Ce*, devant les mots commençans par consonante: Et *Cet*, ou *cest* à l'antique orthographe, devant les mots commençans par voyelle ou h muëtte: *Ce livre, ce cheval. Cet arbre, cet homme*.

> ('We write and pronounce *Ce* before words beginning with a consonant. And *Cet* or the archaic spelling *cest* before words beginning with a vowel or silent 'h': *Ce livre, ce cheval. Cet arbre, cet homme* – this book, this horse, this tree, this man')

Soulfour's usage represents the variation described by Maupas: whilst the masculine pre-consonantal form remains *ce*, we find *cest* and *cet* pre-vocalically, and *ceste* and *cette* for the feminine form. It is difficult to discern any reasons which determine the choice between these forms, which thus appear to be in free variation, with a slight preference for the newer forms. By

the time we reach Vaugelas's two versions, the older forms *cest* and *ceste* have completely disappeared and the modern system is in place (Table 14):

	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
Masc. form + N beginning with a C				
Ce	95 (100%)	89 (100%)	101 (100%)	105 (100%)
Masc. form + N beginning with a V				
Cest	19 (100%)	5 (35.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Cet	0 (0%)	9 (64.3%)	14 (100%)	3 (100%)
Total occurrences	*19*	*14*	*14*	*3*
Feminine form				
Ceste + Fem N	109 (100%)	41 (47.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Cette + Fem N	0 (0%)	46 (52.9%)	128 (100%)	117 (100%)
Total occurrences	*109*	*87*	*128*	*117*

Table 14: Demonstrative determiners

This case of variation, albeit striking, seems to be purely graphic. The next question provides evidence of a real change in the paradigm.

5.5.1.2 Pronouns

Whilst there is continuity in usage of the neuter pronoun *ce* and of the series *celui, celle*, etc. in its prototypical constructions (*celui qui/que* 'the one (masculine singular) who, which', *celui de* [*mon frère*] 'the one of my brother, my brother's'), the series *icelui* and *cestui* show clear evidence of change. On the one hand, they no longer function according to the deictic principles of Old French. Whereas *cestui* in Old French was part of the paradigm expressing proximity to the speaker, it is mostly used by Séguier with the particle *–là* which rather expresses distance from the speaker's world.[69] Conversely, *celui* has lost its function as a distance marker and is used anaphorically to mark textual proximity with what precedes. Above all, both series have completely fallen out of usage by the time of the publication of Vaugelas's translations. As a consequence, the forms *celui-ci* and *celui-là* increase in frequency, thus establishing the modern demonstrative system.[70]

	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
Celui-ci / Celui-là[71]	0	1	8	5
Celle-ci / Celle-là	0	0	2	3
Icelui	8	0	0	0
Icelle	8	1	0	0
Iceux	1	0	0	0
Icelles	2	1	0	0
Cestui(-là)	10	0	0	0

Table 15 : Demonstrative pronouns

In short, our period witnesses the rapid disappearance of *icelui* and *cestui* from the demonstrative pronoun system. This change reflects the comments made by our contemporary informants. Whereas the grammarian Maupas (1618: f° 73r°) considers *icelui* as a simple variant of the personal

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[69] *Cestui* is never used without one of the postposed deictic particles *-ci* or *-là*, but there is just one occurrence of *cestui-ci* compared with 9 occurrences of *cestui-là* (written with or without a hyphen).

[70] This is an interesting case where Vaugelas often choses a different solution from his predecessors. For instance, in the case of a structure of the type *Darius… icelui* ('Darius… this one…'), Vaugelas frequently prefers to use a full NP for the second occurrence, such as *Darius… le Roi* ('Darius… the King…'), or indeed a third person singular pronoun, whether stressed or unstressed, as in *Darius…il/lui* ('Darius… he…').

[71] Frequently spelt *celuy* at this period.

pronoun *il*, Oudin (1640: 124), updating Maupas's text, notes that the series *icelui, icelle*, etc. is no longer favoured:

> parce que personne ne s'en sert plus gueres, je ne veux pas m'arrester à en dire de grandes particularitez, je vous advertis seulement d'en user le moins que vous pourrez, il y a *il, luy, elles, y,* et *en,* que l'on met à leur place: par exemple, au lieu qu'autrefois on disoit: *les promesses de Dieu sont asseurées, confiez-vous en icelles*: nous disons maintenant, *confiez* ou *fiez-vous en elles*: […] on s'en sert pourtant encore en matiere de Justice.
>
> ('since no one longer uses them, I won't stop to give details about them, except to tell you to use them as little as possible, and there are *il, luy, elles, y* and *en* [personal pronouns] which are used instead: for instance, whereas in the past we said *les promesses de Dieu sont asseurées, confiez-vous en icelles* ('God's promises are assured, trust in these') we now say, *confiez* or *fiez-vous en elles* ('trust in them'): […] the forms are still however used in the realm of justice.')

The series *icelui, icelle*, etc. then is restricted to usage in a legal context, and the forms are excluded from good usage. In an early version of his text, published posthumously in 1690, Vaugelas considers that these are « les plus mauvais mots et les plus barbares dont on se sçauroit guéres servir en nôtre Langue » ('the worst and the most barbaric words which one can use in our language', 1690: 245) and in the published version (1647: *472) he mocks those who still use archaic expressions of the type *le pays d'iceluy* or *pour et à icelle fin*.

5.5.2 Relative pronouns

We focus here on one aspect of the paradigm, the gradual replacement of the compound relative, marked for gender and number, *lequel, laquelle, lesquels, lesquelles* (lit. 'the who, the which') in subject position by the simple equivalent *qui* ('who, which'). Whilst the overall number of occurrences of the series *lequel* etc falls notably over the period, this is particularly striking in subject position, as shown in Table 16 and Figure 3:

	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
Lequel (masc sing)	42	1	4	5
Laquelle (fem sing)	31	0	2	0
Lesquels (masc pl)	39	1	1	1
Lesquelles (fem pl)	11	0	3	0
Total for the *lequel* series	**123 (31.3%)**	**2 (0.5%)**	**10 (1.9%)**	**6 (1.3%)**
***Qui* subject**	**270 (68.7%)**	**365 (99.5%)**	**511 (98.1%)**	**470 (98.7%)**

Table 16: Relative pronoun usage in subject position

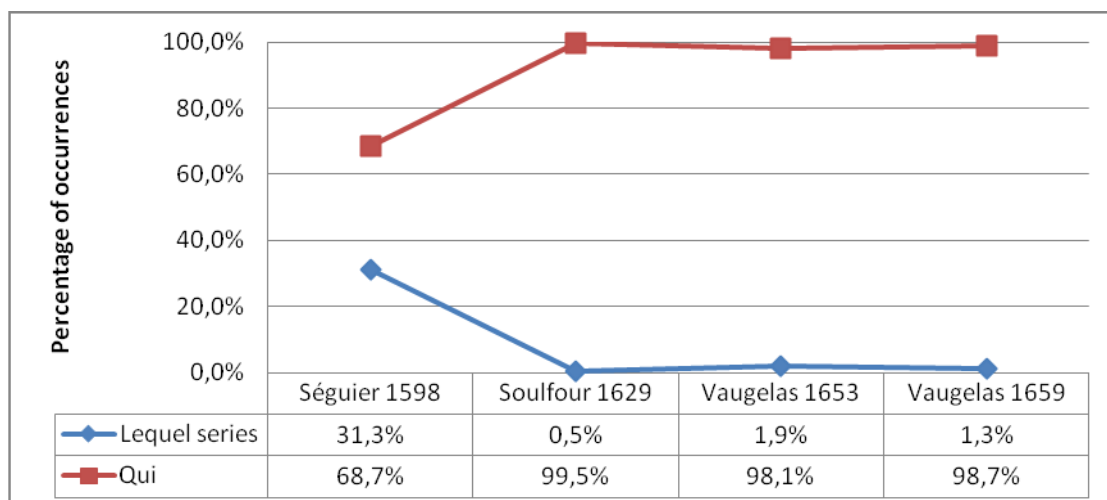|	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
Lequel series	31,3%	0,5%	1,9%	1,3%
Qui	68,7%	99,5%	98,1%	98,7%

Figure 3: Relative pronoun usage in subject position

In Séguier's text (1598), *lequel*, etc. are minority forms, but are still used on almost one in three occasions, whereas in our other three translations usage has fallen to under 2%, demonstrating a clear and rapid loss in currency of these forms. Once again, this loss is charted by our contemporary informants. The grammarian Oudin (1640: 129) states that "les doctes modernes" ('modern educated people') simply no longer use *lequel*, etc. in subject position. For Vaugelas (1647: 115) these forms are "rudes pour l'ordinaire" ('usually coarse'), but, because they are marked for gender and number, they may still be used, for instance, where there is uncertainty as to what the antecedent of the relative pronoun is. In his own practice, avoidance of ambiguity does not appear to be the sole reason for the continued use of *lequel* subject, and we can perhaps identify four other causes:

(i) *qui* and *que* have already been used in the preceding context, meaning that their repetition might result in a construction considered stylistically infelicitous or overly complex;

(ii) there is a participial clause immediately after the relative pronoun which interrupts the continuity of the relative clause;

(iii) the antecedent is morphologically long and complex, making the use of *qui* difficult since the proximity rule requires that *qui* be next to the head noun;

(iv) in a highly periodic or oratorical style, *lequel* constitutes part of the long rhythm of the sentence and thus contributes to an effect of solemnity.

Goux (forthcoming) argues that the decline in *lequel*, etc. is linked to a new conception of textual organisation. In many cases, *lequel* had served to link two textual segments so as to blur the frontier between them. By the middle of the seventeenth century, writers rather favoured a textual architecture which clearly separated each segment (the so called *sentences*) from its neighbours. Moreover, since *lequel* made the sentences longer, it came to be perceived as a potential obstacle to the clarity of the text, a major goal for classical writing.

5.6 Word order: clitic climbing

For each text we analysed the first 100 examples.[72] The results of our analysis are presented in Table 17 and Figure 4.

	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
Clitic + V + Inf	98	93	66	57
V + Clitic + Inf	2	7	34	43
	100	100	100	100

Table 17: Clitic climbing

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[72] We excluded examples where the matrix verb is followed by preposition + infinitive (e.g. *commencer à* + INF or *tâcher de* + INF) since by this period with these verbs clitic climbing is no longer possible.
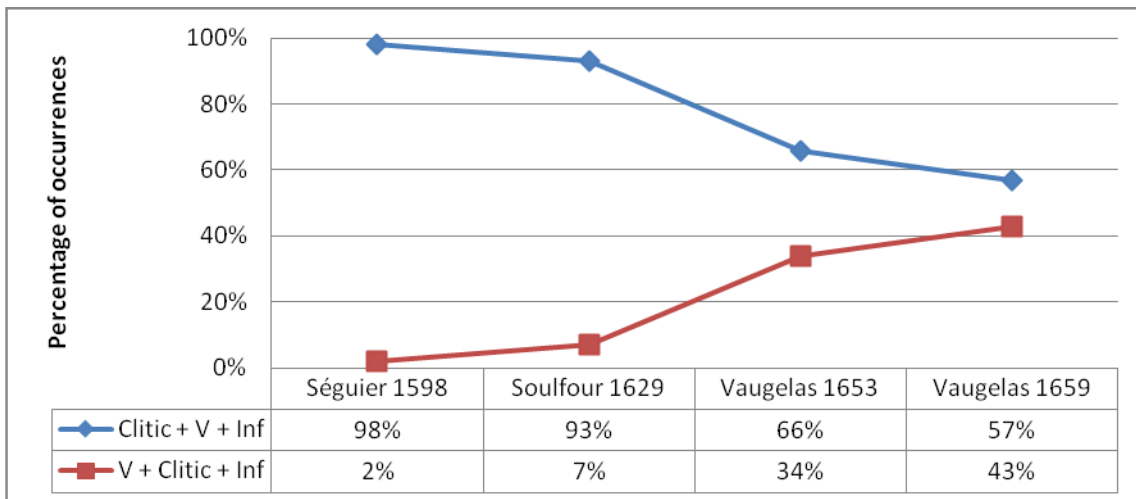
	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
Clitic + V + Inf	98%	93%	66%	57%
V + Clitic + Inf	2%	7%	34%	43%

Figure 4: Clitic climbing

Séguier's syntax is almost entirely archaic in this respect, with 98% of possible contexts having the construction with clitic climbing. In the case of the first example without clitic climbing (16), the modern construction is perhaps favoured because *valoir mieux* is followed by three coordinated infinitives, and the second infinitive (*mettre*) is preceded by a different pronoun (*y*).[73]

(16)   Mais **il valloit** beaucoup **mieux *se* SAISIR** du destroit, qui donne entree en la Cilicie, & ***y* METTRE** bonne garnison, & **TENIR** aussi le sommet de la montagne qui regarde sur le chemin (Séguier 1598: 40)
('But it was better to seize the pass which gives access to Cilicia, and to set up a good garrison there, and also to hold the summit of the mountain which looks over the pass')

In the second example (17), the choice of construction may be influenced by the fact that, if the *se* were placed before *avoyent deliberé*, the auxiliary would have had to change from *avoir* to *être*.

(17)   ils arriverent à la diane au destroit qu'**ils avoyent deliberé *se* SAISIR** (Séguier 1598 : 56)[74]
('they arrived at the reveille at the pass which they had determined to seize')

However, it should be noted that Séguier also uses clitic climbing where there are coordinated infinitives, a case specifically criticised by Vaugelas:

(18)   Mazeus qui avoit esté envoye [sic] avec six mille chevaux pour empescher le passage, **ne *l'*osa ATTENDRE,** ni ***s'*HAZARDER** au combat (1598: 125)
('Mazeus who had been sent with six thousand horses to prevent the passage (them passing), did not dare to wait for it or to risk himself in battle')

Soulfour's usage shows very little change, with only 7 examples of the modern construction, suggesting that we are still in the very early stages of the change. Example (19) is a rare case of change between Séguier and Soulfour:

(19)   a.   & les Tyriens, qui ***les* aimoyent mieux PRENDRE** vifs que de les tuer (Séguier 1598 : 92)
('and the Tyrians who preferred to take them alive rather than kill them')

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[73] In each case the matrix verb is in bold roman type, the clitic in bold italic type, and the infinitive in bold small capitals.
[74] Galet (1971) gives the following "exhaustive" list of the verbs which allow clitic climbing: *accourir, aimer mieux, aller, avoir beau, avoir bon, compter, croire, courir daigner, déclarer, désirer, devoir, espérer, être* with the meaning of 'aller', *ne faire que, falloir, oser, paraître, penser, pouvoir, préférer, prétendre, savoir, sembler, souhaiter, témoigner valoir, valoir mieux, venir, venir de, vouloir.* It is interesting that *délibérer* doesn't feature in this list.

      b.   Les Tyriens **qui aimoient mieux** *les* PRENDRE vifs, que de les tuer d'une mort prompte (Soulfour 1629: 230)
('and the Tyrians who preferred to take them alive rather than kill them quickly')

Whilst Vaugelas still favours the older construction, his texts demonstrate clearly acceleration in the speed of the change, with 34% of cases of the modern construction in the 1653 version and 43% in the 1659 edition. Generally, he follows his own recommendation to use the modern construction to avoid ambiguity, notably in coordinated constructions, but in 1653 there is the occasional counter example:

(20)   a.   chacun *le* venant EMBRASSER & *luy* RENDRE graces (Vaugelas 1653: 231)
('each coming to embrace him and give thanks to him')

In 1659 this is changed to:

      b.   chacun **venant** *l'*EMBRASSER & *luy* RENDRE grace (Vaugelas 1659: 229)

Whilst changes are generally made in favour of the modern construction as in (21) and (22), there are two cases of the modern construction being replaced by the older variant ((23) and (24)).[75] This suggests that stylistic considerations may also affect the choice of construction:

(21)   a.   Qui seroient desormais les estrangers qui *se* **voudroient** plus FIER en luy (Vaugelas 1653 : 236)
('Which foreigners would henceforth want to trust him any more')

      b.   qui seroient desormais les Estrangers qui **voudroient** *se* FIER en luy (Vaugelas 1659: 233)

(22)   a.   il commanda à Ariston […], de *les* **aller** CHARGER (Vaugelas 1653: 325)
('he ordered Ariston to go and charge them')

      b.   il commanda à Ariston […] d'**aller** à toute bride *les* CHARGER (Vaugelas 1659: 314)
('he ordered Ariston to go and charge them at full speed')

(23)   a.   Cependent, Alexandre, quelque soin & quelque diligence qu'il apportast pour descouvrir où estoit Darius, ne **pouvoit** *en* APPRENDRE de nouvelles (Vaugelas 1653: 302)
('However Alexander, whatever care and trouble he took to discover where Darius was, was unable to learn any news about it')

      b.   Cependant Alexandre faisoit toutes les diligences imaginables, pour découvrir de quel costé avoit tiré Darius sans *en* **pouvoir** rien APPRENDRE (Vaugelas 1659: 293)[76]
('However Alexander made every possible effort to discover which way Darius had gone without being able to learn anything')

(24)   a.   que **pouvant** infailliblement *les* DEFAIRE (Vaugelas 1653: 324)
('which being able to defeat them without fail')

      b.   qui *les* **pouvoit** DEFFAIRE aisément (Vaugelas 1659: 314)
('who could defeat them easily')

In considering usage of clitic climbing in the texts, it is also instructive to look at the choice of matrix verb.[77] Yvette Galet (1971: 348) notes that as clitic climbing becomes more archaic, there is

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[75] Only 64 of the contexts are identical because Vaugelas sometimes choses to replace the verb + INF construction with another construction, such as a simple verb.
[76] It is possible that in this case the insertion of *rien* 'anything' influences the choice for the position of *en*.

a concomitant reduction in the number of verbs with which the construction is found. Thus she identifies a reduction in the number of matrix verbs between Corneille's usage in five of his plays (using the 1682 edition) compared with Voltaire's usage in three texts dating from the middle of the eighteenth century (*Candide*, 1759, *L'Ingénu*, 1767, *L'Homme aux Quatre Ecus*, 1768). Whereas Corneille uses the older construction with eleven different matrix verbs, in Voltaire's text this number is reduced to five (in descending order of frequency *pouvoir*, *aller*, *falloir*, *vouloir* and *venir*). The same pattern is discernible in our corpus. In Table 18, the number in brackets is the number of examples of the modern construction (i.e. without clitic climbing). For Séguier the modern construction does not occur with any of the frequently attested verbs, and this is equally true for Soulfour, with the exception of *oser* and *savoir*.

	Séguier 1598	Soulfour 1629	Vaugelas 1653	Vaugelas 1659
Aller	2	14	7	7 (3 [43%])
Devoir	4	6	8 (1 [13%])	6 (1 [17%])
Falloir	4	2	4 (1 [25%])	5 (2 [40%])
Oser	9	3 (2 [67%])	4 (3 [75%])	5 (5 [100%])
pouvoir	57	31	38 (11 [29%])	39 (8 [21%])
Savoir	2	7 (1 [14%]))	4 (3 [75%])	4 (4 [100%])
Venir	5	19[78]	13 (2 [15%])	13 (5 [38%])
Vouloir	13	13	10 (2 [20%])	9 (3 [33%])
Other	4 (2 [50%])	5 (4 [80%])	12 (11 [92%])	12 (12 [100%])
	100 (2)	100 (7)	100 (34)	100 (43)

Table 18 : Choice of matrix verb

In the case of Vaugelas, the number of verbs with which clitic climbing is attested has reduced, and the modern construction is categorical with *oser* and *savoir*. The association with certain verbs – and particularly with *pouvoir* – is perhaps highlighted by the fact that the two cases of change from the modern to the older construction are with *pouvoir* and it is only with this verb that we find an increased percentage of clitic climbing in 1659.

In short, whilst Séguier's and Soulfour's texts show hardly any evidence of change, by the middle of the seventeenth century we are in a period of rapid change, with the older construction becoming more restricted in usage and associated with a decreasing set of verbs.

6. OTHER QUALITATIVE VARIABLES

A number of other features are identified by our contemporary informants, the authors of metalinguistic texts, as being salient in the period. In these cases it is difficult to treat them in the Labovian quantitative paradigm because there is no simple way of identifying all possible contexts for the variable. For example, Ménage (1676: 580) notes that the form *ès* comprised of *en* ('in') and the agglutinated masculine plural definite article *les*, which was formerly considered very elegant, has become "barbarous" and that it can no longer be used, even in legal contexts. In Middle French, the form could be used not only as an alternative to *en les*, but also for *dans les* and *aux*, depending on the context. Whilst we cannot therefore say anything quantitative about its decline, it is striking that there are fourteen occurrence of *ès* (or with the spelling *es*) and three of *esquel*, etc. in Séguier, but none at all in any of the other texts.

There are a number of other features of this type which combine to give an 'archaic'' flavour to Séguier's text. Some, as in the case of *ès*, are peculiar to Séguier's texts, whilst others are shared with Soulfour. However, none of them are characteristic of Vaugelas's usage. The omission of the impersonal pronoun *il* in the expression *il y a* ('there is, there are') is an example of the latter

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[77] Galet (1971: 21) gives an exhaustive list of the verbs she identified in this construction. Of these the following occur in our corpus: *aimer mieux, aller, croire, désirer, devoir, falloir, oser, penser, pouvoir, savoir, sembler, valoir mieux, venir, vouloir*. In addition we have examples with *délibérer, envoyer* and *renvoyer*.
[78] This figure includes an example of the verb *revenir* ('to come back')

situation. In the next sections we treat two interesting cases, verbal periphrases and nominal determination.

6.1 Verbal periphrases

Very occasionally it is Soulfour's text which has more instances of a feature going out of usage, as in the case of the 'durative' verbal periphrasis formed with the appropriate tense of *aller* 'to go' + the *–ant* form of the lexical verb. According to Gougenheim in his classic study of 1971, certain usages of this construction were already grammaticalised in the Old French period, at least in epic literature and verse historical narratives. Thus, whilst in modern French a verb form like *je chante* expresses both the punctual 'I sing' and the durative or imperfective sense 'I am singing', in earlier periods the form *je vais chantant* was one of the possibilities for expressing the latter meaning. The periphrasis was not only common (1971: 3) and used in all tenses and moods (1971: 5), but examples with verbs expressing the completion of all movement, delay, waiting and sleep seem to confirm that the lexical verb has been completely bleached of its semantic content. Gougenheim observes that the periphrasis was still commonly used in the sixteenth century, not only in poetry, but also in prose and in *la langue vulgaire* or non-standard usage.

　　What do seventeenth-century metalinguistic texts tell us about the periphrasis? Vaugelas (1647: 185-188) maintains that it is no longer in usage, either in poetry or prose, unless there is "a visible movement", which means that the verb *aller* 'to go' is appropriate. In other words he seems to identify a certain degrammaticalisation of the construction, whereby the verb *aller* is no longer considered as merely having the function of an auxiliary, but retains some of its original semantic value. As regards usage in different genres, he notes that it has lost more ground in poetry, while citing a verse example by Malherbe. The discussion by Vaugelas's successors focuses on two main issues: the difference between usage in poetry and prose, and the semantic classes of verb which may be appropriately used. In our corpus of translations, Séguier uses the construction on just one occasion:

(25)　　Ce peu d'hommes donc les **alloit battant** comme va troupeau de bestes (Séguier 1598: 65)
　　　　('This small group of men then was beating them like a herd of animals')

However, it is more frequent in Soulfour, who uses the construction on twenty-seven occasions, typically where actual movement is involved (26), but also in other contexts (27):

(26)　　un des Eunuques prisonniers de la femme de Darius, **s'en vint courant** lui dire (Soulfour 1629: 273)
　　　　('One of the Eunochs who were prisoners of Darius's wife, went off running to tell him')

(27)　　il fit cognoistre que sa maladie **alloit diminuant** (Soulfour 1629: 164)
　　　　('he made it known than his illness was abating')

Turning now to Vaugelas's two versions, there is a single example of the construction in 1653, and there is movement involved:

(28)　　Cette poignée de gens les **alloit chassant** devant soy comme des troupeaux de moutons (Vaugelas 1653: 251)
　　　　('this handful of men was chasing them in front of them like a flock of sheep')

What is striking is that this is precisely the single context in which Séguier used the construction.[79] We know that Vaugelas borrowed material from both Perrot d'Ablancourt and Soulfour in his translation (Ayres-Bennett 1987: 155-157), and this perhaps suggests he also had Séguier's

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[79] Soulfour (1629: 193) chooses not to use the construction in this instance, preferring instead a simple imperfect tense: *car une poignee d'hommes **chassoit** de grandes troupes comme troupeaux de bestes* ('since a handful of men chased large bodies of troops as if they were herds of animals').

translation before him when he was doing his own version. Certainly the verbal periphrasis is replaced in the 1659 version by a simple imperfect:

(29)   Cette poignée de gens les **chassoit** devant soy comme un troupeau de moutons (Vaugelas 1659: 246)

As regards this feature, then, Soulfour's text stands out as being different from all the others.

6.2 A complex case: noun phrases without a determiner
We want now to discuss the case of nominal determination which, despite its extreme complexity, is impossible to ignore, given the number of comments relating to the use or non-use of determiners made by the *remarqueurs*. Vaugelas offers several remarks concerning this variable, of which the following is perhaps the best known:

> Nostre langue à l'imitation de la Grecque, aime extremement les articles; il faut dire, *il a de l'esprit*, *il a de l'esprit et du cœur*, je ne sçay si l'on ne dira point encore, *il a sang aux ongles*. Ce n'est pas qu'en certains endroits on ne se dispense des articles avec une grace merveilleuse, mais c'est rarement, et il faut bien les sçavoir choisir. M. Coeffeteau, *il fit main basse, et tua femmes et enfans*. Mais *il a esprit*, ne se peut dire ny selon le bon usage, ny selon la Grammaire. (Vaugelas 1647: 170-171)

> ('Our language, imitating Greek, has a great liking for articles; you should say, *il a de l'esprit, il a de l'esprit et du coeur* [he has spirit and courage, +determiner], and I'm not sure whether one can still say *il a sang aux ongles* [he has spirit (lit. he has blood [-determiner] in the nails)]. It's not that one cannot very elegantly in certain places do without articles, but these occasions are very rare and you have to know how to choose them. Mr Coeffeteau, *il fit main basse, et tua femmes et enfans* [he put all to the sword, and killed women and children, -determiner]. But it is neither good usage nor grammatical to say *il a esprit* [he has spirit, -determiner].

From this extract, it is clear that we are dealing with at least two different types of contexts. On the one hand, there is a case of an idiomatic verbal expression which has been lexicalised, *faire main basse*, 'to put all to the sword, lit. to lay [make] low hand[s] on', and, on the other hand, there are two cases of a direct object without a determiner, of which the first is a mass noun (*avoir sang*, 'to have spirit, lit. to have blood') and the second the (plural) count nouns *femmes* and *enfants* (*tua femmes et enfants*, 'killed women and children'). In other words, we are not dealing with one simple phenomenon.

Basing ourselves on the first 100 examples of the non-use of the article in Séguier's 1598 translation, we identified two principal types of context:
a) Usages in which the noun phrase is clearly referential. Depending on the context, the referent may be:

(i)   A plural indefinite count noun, as in:

(30) En apres marchoit le chariot de Jupiter, trainé **par chevaux blancs** (Séguier 1598: 36)
'There came afterwards the chariot of Jupiter, pulled by white horses [-determiner]'[80]

(ii)   A singular indefinite count noun, as in:

(31) Mais il valloit beaucoup mieux se saisir du destroit, qui donne entree en la Cilicie, et y mettre **bonne garnison** (Séguier 1598: 40)

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[80] This example, in fact, provides an excellent instance of change, since in the three subsequent versions, the noun phrase *chevaux blancs* is preceded by the determiner *des*:
Et puis suivoit le chariot sacré à Jupiter, trainé par **des** chevaux blancs (Soulfour 1629: 154)
Apres, venoit un char consacré à Jupiter tiré par **des** chevaux blancs (Vaugelas 1653: 217)
Apres venoit un char consacré à Jupiter, traisné par **des** chevaux blancs (Vaugelas 1659: 217)

'But it was much better to seize the strait which gives access to Cilicia and to set up a strong garrison [-determiner] there'[81]

(iii)   A singular count noun which is semantically generic, as in:

(32) les hommes de cheval de Thessalie, Acarnaniens, et Ætoliens, gens invincibles **en guerre** (Séguier 1598: 33)
'the cavalrymen of Thessaly, the Acarnanians and Aetolians, who were invincible in war [-determiner]'

(iv)   A singular mass noun used partitively, as in:

(33) Pendant ces choses Alexandre ayant envoyé Cleander **avec argent** au Peloponnese pour lever des soldats (Séguier 1598 : 27)
'Meanwhile, Alexander having sent Cleander with money [-determiner] to the Peloponnese to enlist some soldiers'

(v)   It may constitute the second term of a coordinated structure, as we saw in section 5.4 above.

(vi)   It may be a proper name without a determiner, notably referring to a person or a place; but it may also be a common noun treated as a proper noun, as in:

(34) ceux qui se laissent manier à la fortune, ont oublié **nature** (Séguier 1598: 34)[82]
'those who let themselves be led by chance, have forgotten nature [-determiner]'

In each of these cases, the reader carries out an act of referring, in the sense that s/he constructs an object, whether real or imaginary, from the particular semantic features contributed by the noun. A plural ending will clearly orientate the reading towards an indefinite count noun, whereas a singular ending leaves the interpretation open according to the context and the particular lexeme, so that the noun may be interpreted semantically as a mass noun used partitively, as a singular indefinite count noun, or as a count noun with a generic meaning.

It is in these cases that we clearly see change in our corpus. What happens is that nouns used referentially come increasingly to require a determiner, with the notable exception of proper names referring to people, which remain self-referential, and enumerations. That said, certain partially lexicalised expressions survive as idiomatic expressions: they are no longer constructed in discourse, but are henceforth fixed expressions in the language. This type of expression fits more naturally into our second category, showing that the two classes are not totally distinct.

b)   The second category is more frequently attested and remains much more stable throughout modern French. In these cases, the noun is not the head of a syntagm with a referential function. It includes the following cases:
(i)   Support verb constructions in which the noun joined to the verb is not (or is no longer) its argument; the verb is largely bleached of its semantic content and the meaning of the noun contributes to the verbal meaning. There is, of course, some

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[81] This example illustrates how subsequent translators may choose a different expression, thus making simple comparison of the translations difficult :
Mais il eut bien mieux faict pour garder les destroicts et l'entree de la Cilicie, de mettre **bonne garnison** (Soulfour 1629: 159)
Mais il eust beaucoup mieux valu occuper avec **de puissantes troupes** l'entrée du destroit qui conduit en la Cilicie (Vaugelas 1653: 221)
Mais il valoit bien mieux se saisir de ce destroit avec **de puissantes troupes** (Vaugelas 1659: 221)
[82] In each of the following translations we find rather *la nature* with a definite article (Soulfour 1629: 152; Vaugelas 1653: 215; Vaugelas 1659: 214-215).

variability within this category with the disappearance of certain verbal expressions, but the phenomenon as such remains unchanged. One of the characteristics of these verbal expressions is therefore that they are partially or totally lexicalised: examples include *avoir faute de* 'to lack, lit. to have lack of', *avoir nouvelles* 'to learn, lit. to have news', *faire halte* 'to stop, lit. to make [a] stop', *faire tête* 'to resist', *faire cas de* 'to take notice of', *tenir compte de* 'to take account of'. The most commonly occurring support verbs are *avoir* 'to have', *donner* 'to give', *prendre* 'to take', *faire* 'to do' and *mettre* 'to put'. Moreover, the meaning of the verbal expression is usually equivalent to the meaning of a simple verb:

(35) Alexandre donc **n'eust point faute** de soldats au combat (= il ne manqua pas de) (Séguier 1598: 39)
('Alexander therefore did not lack (lit. did not have lack of) soldiers in the combat')

(36) Quand Darius **eut receu nouvelles** de sa maladie, il s'achemina vers l'Euphrates (= Quand Darius eut appris […]) (Séguier 1598: 49)
'When Darius had learnt (lit. had received news) of his illness, he made his way towards the Euphrates')

(37) [Darius] leur avoit commandé de **faire teste aux** Macedoniens (= de résister) (Séguier 1598: 57)
('Darius had ordered them to resist (make resistance [lit. head] to) the Macedonians')

These expressions can sometimes be read as in the cases above (where for instance *faire halte*, 'to stop' is equivalent to *faire une halte* 'to make a stop'), but through lexicalisation they have become compound verbs. These support verb constructions remain as part of the verb system throughout modern French and survive to the present day. That said, this type of construction is no longer really productive in the seventeenth century; in many cases the existing constructions survive, but in others, they also succumb to the general tendency to have a determiner, especially when the constructions are less frequently used and less fixed.

(ii)   Adjectival construction which employ a prepositional structure and where the noun is preceded by *de* (lit. 'from') or *à* (lit. 'to'). These are not lexicalised, but they qualify the noun in the same way as an adjective would:

(38) Il lui sembla en dormant qu'il voyoit toute l'armee d'Alexandre tresluire par une grande lueur **de feu** (Séguier 1598: 35)
('It seemed to him as he slept that he saw the whole of Alexander's army shine brightly with a bright glow of fire')

This construction remains productive and extremely common throughout modern French.

(iii)   Adverbial or circumstantial expressions which are not lexicalised and which typically have a prepositional structure:

(39) [il] estoit aussi tourmenté par quelques visions qui lui venoyent en songeant, soit **par indisposition**, soit que son esprit presagit desja **par divination** ce qu'il lui devoit advenir (Séguier 1598: 35)
('he was also tormented by visions which came to him in his dreams, either through [his] indisposition, or because his mind already foresaw through divination what was to happen to him')

(40) armez de haches (Séguier 1598: 31)
('armed with axes')

(41) semé de pierres precieuses (Séguier 1598: 37)
('sown with precious stones')

This type of construction is also productive and remains in usage throughout the modern French period. Plurals of the type *de N* have, in certain cases, been analysed as if the indefinite article *des* or the partitive article (*du*, *de la*) had been lost because of the sequence *de + du*, *de + de la*, *de + des* (Apothéloz & Nowakowska 2003). This case then poses particular difficulties for our analysis.

(iv) Structures which are completely grammaticalised as conjunctions or prepositions:

(42) Hector apres avoir longuement combatu contre le fleuve, ne pouvant nager **à cause que** sa robe estoit mouillee […] vint neantmoins enfin jusques au rivage (Séguier 1598: 120-121)
('Hector, having fought for a long time against the river, unable to swim because (lit for [the] reason that) his robe was soaked […] nevertheless finally managed to reach the bank')

(43) [Il] leur avoit commandé de battre l'estrade, et recognoistre les advenues, **de peur que** l'ennemi estant en embuscade ne les chargeast en entrant (Séguier 1598: 42)
('He had ordered them to scour the countryside, and to reconnoitre the ways for fear that the enemy lying in ambush should charge them as they entered')

Apart from these two main categories, there is a third, more minor, case which is somewhat different, namely nouns are used with a metalinguistic function:

(44) Ils estoyent appellés **lanciers** (Séguier 1598: 37)
('They were called lancers')

(45) La derniere compagnie estoit celle de Meleager, laquelle estoit suivie par l'escadron des gens de pied nommé **phalange** (Séguier 1598: 148)
('The last company was Meleager's, which was followed by the squadron of foot soldiers called [a] phalange')

If we now return to the cases discussed by the *remarqueurs*, we are dealing essentially with the referential cases and support verb constructions. Our corpus displays two distinct phenomena. Firstly, we find the loss of partially lexicalised support verb constructions whenever the noun in a given context can be read as an argument of the verb, as in *faire rapport* ('to make [a] report, report'), *recevoir lettres* ('to receive letters'), *donner licence de* ('give permission to'), *faire serment de* ('to take [an] oath, swear'), *faire montre* ('to show, make show of'), *faire revue de* ('to review, inspect'), *envoyer secours* ('to send help'). The translators after Séguier generally prefer not to use these structures and favour instead the structure verb + determiner + noun, in which the verb construction is delexicalised. Secondly, we find the increasing disappearance of referential constructions without a determiner; indeed, our translators tend to avoid these, even before the *remarqueurs* comment on them.

In order to examine these changes in our texts, we collected 100 occurrences from Séguier which clearly belonged to the two categories outlined above. We excluded all cases of the type *de + N* for the reasons outlined above. We then looked at how these constructions were translated in the later versions. It is of course difficult to treat this question in strictly quantitative terms, since the translator may simply choose a different formulation in which the question of the presence or absence of the determiner is no longer relevant. Bearing these provisos in mind, we nevertheless find that, of these 100 representative examples, only 45 remain in virtually identical form. The other 55 – where the form without a determiner is replaced – fall into two categories: 21 examples are found in Vaugelas's translations, but with the addition of a determiner; 34 examples are not

translated in the same way by him. In these cases it is impossible to determine whether the replacement is made because the previous version is no longer possible, or because our translator simply prefers a different expression. Nevertheless, even taking the most conservative position, we can say that in at least a fifth of cases Vaugelas inserts a determiner in the noun phrase.

How should we interpret these results? Firstly, certain support verb constructions quickly lose currency. The process of lexicalisation seems to have been interrupted and the later translators either choose an alternative construction or else they 'decompose' or 'delexicalise' the structure, viewing it once again as a simple V + Determiner + Noun construction, which therefore comes to require a determiner. To cite two examples of a verb support structure being completely eliminated, we may cite the case of *faire serment* which is used by Séguier (e.g. *Strato* [...] *fit serment de fidelité au Roy* (1598: 78)) and Soulfour (1629), but which never occurs in Vaugelas's texts, or that of *donner courage* (lit. 'to give courage') which occurs in Séguier (e.g. 1598: 84), but is not employed in any of the subsequent translations. The following two examples are illustrations of cases where a support verb construction is replaced with (or reinterpreted as) a Verb + Determiner + Noun structure:

(46) *faire montre, faire revue*[83]
    a.   apres avoir **fait monstre** de son armee, il entra en la Paphlagonie (Séguier 1598: 30)
           ('having reviewed his army, he entered Paphlagonia')
    b.   ayant **faict faire la montre** à son armee. Il entra dedans la Paflagonie (Soulfour 1629: 147)
    c.   apres avoir **fait la reveuë** de son armée, il entra dans la Paphlagonie (Vaugelas 1653: 211)
    d.   où ayant **fait la reveuë** de son armée, il entra dans la Paphlagonie (Vaugelas 1659: 210)

(47) *donner licence*[84]
    a.   la miserable condition du Roy **donnoit licence** aux plus belistres mesmes d'entreprendre contre lui (Séguier 1598: 74)
           ('the miserable condition of the king gave licence to even the most worthless of them to attack him')
    b.   ce mal-heureux Prince en estant venu à ce point, que jusqu'aux plus vils et aux plus abjets des hommes **se donnoient la licence** de violer sa dignité (Vaugelas 1653: 262)
    c.   Darius en estant venu à ce point, que les plus abjets des hommes **se donnoient la licence** de violer sa dignité (Vaugelas 1659: 256)

Turning now to our second type, constructions with a referential value, these all tend to undergo generalisation of the use of the determiner. To cite some of the clearest examples of this tendency:

(48) *recevoir lettres* ('to receive letters')
    a.   il **receut lettres** de Parmenion (Séguier 1598: 46)
           ('he received letters from Parmenion')
    b.   il **receut lettres** de Parmenion (Soulfour 1629: 167)
    c.   il **receut des lettres** de Parmenion (Vaugelas 1653: 228)
    d.   il **reçeut des lettres** de Parmenion (Vaugelas 1659: 226)

(49) *offrir nouvelles conditions* ('to offer new conditions')
    a.   pour **offrir nouvelles conditions de paix** (Séguier 1598: 134)
           ('to offer new conditions for peace')
    b.   pour lui **porter nouvelles ouvertures de paix** (Soulfour 1629: 277)
    c.   pour luy **proposer de nouvelles conditions de paix** (Vaugelas 1659: 323)[85]

It is important to bear in mind, as our statistics above show, that there are equally cases where there is no change. In other words, we are dealing with a clear case of evolution, but not a categorical

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[83] Synonymous in this context.
[84] Not attested in Soulfour (1629).
[85] Not used in Vaugelas (1653).

change. Thus, in the following example which uses *faire rapport*, successive translators hesitate between retaining the construction without a determiner and adding one in:

(50) *faire rapport* ('to report, make a report')

    a.   afin qu'ils vissent ses forces: et que les ayant veuës, ils en **fissent rapport** à leur Roy (Séguier 1598: 55)

               'so that they could see his forces, and, having seen them, they reported this to their king'

    b.   1629: no occurrence of *faire + rapport*

    c.   pour luy **faire le rapport** de tout ce qu'ils auroient veû (Vaugelas 1653: 238)

               'to tell him all that they had seen'

    d.   afin qu'ils vissent ses forces, et qu'apres les avoit bien contemplées ils en **fissent rapport** à leur Roy (Vaugelas 1659: 235)

               'so that they saw his forces, and having had a good look at them, they reported this to their king'

While then, it is not possible to treat this feature quantitatively as we have treated the variables in the previous section, we can see clear evidence of variation and evolution towards a more generalised use of determiners.

7. DISCUSSION

It is perhaps worth restating here that the purpose of our analysis is not simply to observe changes in the frequency of the variables *per se*, but rather to focus on the question of periodization. Our fundamental question is therefore whether it is possible to identify discontinuity in the continuum of language through time and how we establish 'frontiers' between periods, if such breaks do exist.

In Tables 19-22, we present the results of our quantitative analysis from section 5 according to the phases of change proposed by Labov and using the percentages for each phase suggested by Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg, since these are based on their analysis of the history of English (see Table 1 above). Where the name is given in bold, this indicates that the new form has reached 100% of occurrences.

We can perhaps group these changes into three main types:

- Those which have undergone very rapid change with the completion of all the stages in a period of around 60 years[86] (Table 19)
- Those where the change seems to progress rapidly from the middle stages to completion (Table 21)
- Those in the first three stages of Labov's model (Table 22)

What is remarkable is the number of the changes we have analysed which follow the pattern presented in Table 19, where the change between the different phases of change is very rapid. Some of these may have been facilitated by the fact that other related changes were already completed (Table 20), but this does not explain the speed of all of them. Rather than starting slowly, progressing swiftly in the middle phases and then completing slowly as we would expect from the traditional S-curve model, these changes have passed from incipience to completion very rapidly. Our second group is also atypical (Table 21), since again rather than the older variant slowly disappearing from usage, we have evidence of a comparatively fast stage of obsolescence. We consider that it is the combination or cumulative effect of these first two somewhat abnormal patterns which give our contemporary observers the impression of a 'break' or a 'rupture' in the continuum of language, and therefore a sense that they belong to a different generation – or a different period – from their predecessors. Of course, not all features behave like this, as Table 22 demonstrates: the language necessarily continues to change and innovate, even where a number of other changes coincide in their completion.

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[86] Since Vaugelas died in 1650.

What of the question of the existence and the dating of a period of pre-classical French? Our tables illustrate clearly that Séguier, of the generation of *anciens auteurs*, and Vaugelas, a modern, do not belong to the same *état de langue*. Soulfour's usage patterns sometimes with Séguier, sometimes with Vaugelas; on occasions Soulfour's text represents a transitional stage between Séguier's usage and Vaugelas's, and, as our qualitative analysis has shown, it may even be more conservative than Séguier's.

In other words, Soulfour's text seems to lie on the cusp between two periods. Vaugelas had already shown a first version of the manuscript of his *Remarques* to the French Academy in 1637, suggesting that by then the body of his doctrine was already established. As with isoglosses, we might then see the isochrones as bundling in the period 1620 to 1640 with c. 1630 as a pivotal point.[87]

	vindrent /vinrent	prindrent / prirent	dedans / dans	chaque / chacun	chacun / un chacun	devant que/ avant que
Incipient < 15%	Séguier 1585 Soulfour 1629	Séguier 1585	Séguier 1585	Séguier 1585		Séguier 1585
New and vigorous 15%-35%					Séguier 1585	
Mid-range 35%-65%						
Nearing completion 66%-85%			Soulfour 1629			
Completed > 85%	Vaugelas 1653 **Vaugelas 1659**	**Soulfour 1629 Vaugelas 1653 Vaugelas 1659**	**Vaugelas 1653 Vaugelas 1659**	**Soulfour 1629 Vaugelas 1653 Vaugelas 1659**	**Soulfour 1629 Vaugelas 1653 Vaugelas 1659**	**Soulfour 1629 Vaugelas 1653 Vaugelas 1659**
	pource que / parce que	par après / en après / après	cest / cet	ceste/ cette		
Incipient < 15%	Séguier 1585		Séguier 1585	Séguier 1585		
New and vigorous 15%-35%		Séguier 1585				
Mid-range 35%-65%			Soulfour 1629	Soulfour 1629		
Nearing completion 66%-85%						
Completed > 85%	Soulfour 1629 **Vaugelas 1653 Vaugelas 1659**	**Soulfour 1629 Vaugelas 1653 Vaugelas 1659**	**Vaugelas 1653 Vaugelas 1659**	**Vaugelas 1653 Vaugelas 1659**		

Table 19: Rapid change between 1585 and 1659

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[87] We might also mention here Honoré d'Urfé's reworking of *L'Astrée* right up to his death in 1625, so that there are significant differences between the original versions of the first three volumes (published in 1607, 1610, 1619), and the later edition of 1621.

	print / prit	dessous / sous, dessus / sur, dehors / hors
Incipient **< 15%**		
New and vigorous **15%-35%**		
Mid-range **35%-65%**		
Nearing completion **66%-85%**		
Completed **> 85%**	Séguier 1585 **Soulfour 1629** **Vaugelas 1653** **Vaugelas 1659**	Séguier 1585 Soulfour 1629 **Vaugelas 1653** **Vaugelas 1659**

Table 20: Changes related to those in Table 19, but already completed by 1585

	Coordination: **NP + NP**	**lequel / qui** **subject**	**icelui/lui, il**
Incipient **< 15%**			
New and vigorous **15%-35%**			
Mid-range **35%-65%**	Séguier 1585		
Nearing **completion** **66%-85%**	Soulfour 1629	Séguier 1585	Séguier 1598
Completed **> 85%**	Vaugelas 1653 Vaugelas 1659	Soulfour 1629 Vaugelas 1653 Vaugelas 1659	Soulfour 1629 **Vaugelas 1653** **Vaugelas 1659**

Table 21: Changes reaching completion very quickly

	Clitic climbing	**Coordination:** **V clauses**
Incipient **< 15%**	Séguier 1585 Soulfour	
New and vigorous **15%-35%**	Vaugelas 1653	Séguier 1598 Soulfour 1629 Vaugelas 1659
Mid-range **35%-65%**	Vaugelas 1659	Vaugelas 1653
Nearing completion **66%-85%**		
Completed **> 85%**		

Table 22: Newer changes

If we are correct in identifying a break around 1630[88], then we are forced to reconsider the validity of pre-classical French as a period. We would argue that Séguier's language retains certain features typical of Middle French usage, and it is these which finally disappear around 1630. The evidence from this study does not therefore support the identification of a period of pre-classical French, at least as it is currently conceived.[89] On the other hand, many of the linguistic features traditionally associated with classical French (as a sub-division of modern French) are already

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[88] This is, of course, a periodization based on written evidence: there may well be a time lag compared with spoken usage.
[89] We leave for future research the question of whether Middle French should be subdivided in some different way.

dominant or indeed categorical in the 1630s. As we have noted elsewhere, rather than directing change or prescribing new usages, the *remarqueurs* observing language from the 1640s on, often record change which has already completed, or at least advanced greatly. As Alemand (1688) observes, it would take another generation for all the changes to crystallise into the notion of a 'classical style', but texts published in the 1630s and 1640s already use the variants typically associated with the modern French period. Our provisional conclusion therefore, which will need to be tested by other studies using a wide range of other text types and sources, is that the *terminus a quo* for modern French should be moved forward to around 1630.

As we stated in the introduction, our aim was to look for linguistic correlates for our hypotheses about periodization, that is, to rely on internal rather than external factors. Are there, however, external factors which help explain why we see the relatively rapid completion of a number of changes in the period? A number of scholars, including Peter Trudgill (e.g. 2011: 13), have argued that social upheavals can accelerate change, and the period under review seems to exemplify such a correlation very clearly. Considerations of space mean that we can only sketch out briefly the key elements for our period, but it would be an understatement to say that the period under discussion was one of great troubles for France, with the Wars of Religion (1562-1598), the difficult question of Henry of Navarre's accession to the French throne on account of his Protestant faith, the slow restoration of peace and unity to the country up to his assassination in 1610 (following that of Henri III in 1589), and the series of civil wars known as the Fronde (1648-1653). A particularly significant feature of the changing politico-social landscape for language change was the crushing of the Parlement de Paris, the chief judicial body, from 1622 on. The Parlement had enjoyed a right to oppose royal decisions through the so-called 'right of remonstrance' which allowed it to complain (remonstrate) about new laws and thus to claim that it could temper the power of the monarchy. However, the political and religious troubles suffered by the Bourbon kings led them to seek to limit all opposition through the theological argument of the divine right of kings: the king derived his powers directly from God and he alone could delegate these as he wished. Henry IV had already used coercion to temper the opposition of the Paris Parlement (De Waele 2000), but the hostility towards it deepened under Louis XIII and the uncompromising authority of his chief minister, the Cardinal de Richelieu. The secret memoirs of Omer Talon, Avocat general, studied by Olivier Cornette (Cornette 1998), reveal the extent of the struggle for power which ended in the humiliating capitulation of the Parlement. The consequences – and notably the linguistic consequences – of this defeat are obvious. The language of the Parlement, which had been proposed, together with that of the royal court, as a possible source for good usage in the sixteenth century (Trudeau 1992), and which was conservative in nature, thereby lost status and was reduced to a jargon henceforth only deemed suitable for the legal domain. Conversely, the more progressive variants of the royal court rose in favour as royal power increased. In such a context, Vaugelas's definition of good usage in his *Remarques* of 1647 which no longer includes that of the Paris Parlement is highly significant: indeed Vaugelas is explicit on occasions that legal usage is not to be followed.

8. CONCLUSION

The hypothesis offered here for the correct periodization for the history of standard written French and the dating of 'modern French', based as it is on a very limited textual sample, is naturally tentative and will need to be tested using other corpora and text types. We hope nevertheless to have contributed to the debate about periodization in a number of important ways. Moreover, we believe there are a number of methodological insights which arise from our discussion.

Firstly, our study has demonstrated that the detailed analysis of changing usage over a short period of time can be very insightful, especially if the focus is on a key period of change. We were struck by the fact that our contemporary informants, the authors of metalinguistic texts, constantly comment on the rapidly changing nature of the French language between the beginning and the middle of the century. Indeed, they go so far as to identify different generations of authors, who reflect changing usage.

Our choice of variants for analysis was equally determined by those which were salient for our contemporary informants. Rather than being corpus-driven or being decided by established wisdom about which linguistic features changes between Middle and Modern French, our selection of variables was guided by the testimony of the authors of contemporary works on French, and notably of the authors of volumes of observations. We believe that these texts provide valuable evidence of changing usage in the seventeenth century, contrary to traditional accounts which have often dismissed them as prescriptive and therefore of little interest for historical linguists.[90]

In the analysis of our results, we looked, on the one hand, at the extent to which they mapped onto Labov's five stages of change and, on the other hand, how far they followed the traditional S-curve proposed for linguistic change. In terms of the labels used for the different stages of change – incipient, new and vigorous, mid-range, nearing completion and completed – we would propose replacing the label 'nearing completion' with a more neutral one, such as 'becoming dominant'. It seems to us that, if the older usage is occurring, say 33% of the time (or in one in three cases), it would still be perceptible for speakers and a part of their linguistic competence. Thus, 'nearing completion' seems to rather over-state the case, at least for the lower percentages within this category.

More importantly, perhaps, we have seen that the final stages of change are not necessarily very slow, as our results in Table 21 in particular have highlighted. Indeed, we have identified a number of somewhat atypical patterns of change compared with our expectations about the nature of change. It is perhaps the cumulative effect of these atypical patterns of change – comprising examples of changes which move very rapidly through the stages (Table 19) with those where the final stages of the change seem to complete very rapidly – that contributes to the sense of periodization, not only for us as twenty-first century researchers but also for our seventeenth-century observers of French usage.

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[90] For further evidence to support this position, see Ayres-Bennett 2012, Ayres-Bennett forthcoming.

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